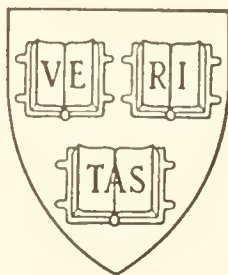




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TESTIMONY OF REV. JAMES H. ROBINSON

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HEARING  
BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
EIGHTY-EIGHTH CONGRESS  
SECOND SESSION

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MAY 5, 1964  
INCLUDING INDEX

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Committee on Un-American Activities

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WASHINGTON : 1964

COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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FRANK S. TAVENNER, Jr., *General Counsel*

ALFRED M. NITTLE, *Counsel*

WILLIAM HITZ, *Counsel*

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## PUBLIC LAW 601, 79TH CONGRESS

The legislation under which the House Committee on Un-American Activities operates is Public Law 601, 79th Congress [1946]; 60 Stat. 812, which provides:

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, \* \* \**

### PART 2—RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

#### RULE X

##### SEC. 121. STANDING COMMITTEES

\* \* \* \* \*  
17. Committee on Un-American Activities, to consist of nine Members.

#### RULE XI

##### POWERS AND DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

\* \* \* \* \*  
(q) (1) Committee on Un-American Activities.

(A) Un-American activities.

(2) The Committee on Un-American Activities, as a whole or by subcommittee, is authorized to make from time to time investigations of (i) the extent, character, and objects of un-American propaganda activities in the United States, (ii) the diffusion within the United States of subversive and un-American propaganda that is instigated from foreign countries or of a domestic origin and attacks the principle of the form of government as guaranteed by our Constitution, and (iii) all other questions in relation thereto that would aid Congress in any necessary remedial legislation.

The Committee on Un-American Activities shall report to the House (or to the Clerk of the House if the House is not in session) the results of any such investigation, together with such recommendations as it deems advisable.

For the purpose of any such investigation, the Committee on Un-American Activities, or any subcommittee thereof, is authorized to sit and act at such times and places within the United States, whether or not the House is sitting, has recessed, or has adjourned, to hold such hearings, to require the attendance of such witnesses and the production of such books, papers, and documents, and to take such testimony, as it deems necessary. Subpenas may be issued under the signature of the chairman of the committee or any subcommittee, or by any member designated by any such chairman, and may be served by any person designated by any such chairman or member.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### RULE XII

##### LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT BY STANDING COMMITTEES

SEC. 136. To assist the Congress in appraising the administration of the laws and in developing such amendments or related legislation as it may deem necessary, each standing committee of the Senate and the House of Representatives shall exercise continuous watchfulness of the execution by the administrative agencies concerned of any laws, the subject matter of which is within the jurisdiction of such committee; and, for that purpose, shall study all pertinent reports and data submitted to the Congress by the agencies in the executive branch of the Government.

RULES ADOPTED BY THE SSTH CONGRESS

House Resolution 5, January 9, 1963

\* \* \* \* \*

RULE X

STANDING COMMITTEES

1. There shall be elected by the House, at the commencement of each Congress,

\* \* \* \* \*

(r) Committee on Un-American Activities, to consist of nine Members.

\* \* \* \* \*

RULE XI

POWERS AND DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

\* \* \* \* \*

18. Committee on Un-American Activities.

(a) Un-American activities.

(b) The Committee on Un-American Activities, as a whole or by subcommittee, is authorized to make from time to time investigations of (1) the extent, character, and objects of un-American propaganda activities in the United States, (2) the diffusion within the United States of subversive and un-American propoganda that is instigated from foreign countries or of a domestic origin and attacks the principle of the form of government as guaranteed by our Constitution, and (3) all other questions in relation thereto that would aid Congress in any necessary remedial legislation.

The Committee on Un-American Activities shall report to the House (or to the Clerk of the House if the House is not in session) the results of any such investigation, together with such recommendations as it deems advisable.

For the purpose of any such investigation, the Committee on Un-American Activities, or any subcommittee thereof, is authorized to sit and act at such times and places within the United States, whether or not the House is sitting, has recessed, or has adjourned, to hold such hearings, to require the attendance of such witnesses and the production of such books, papers, and documents, and to take such testimony, as it deems necessary. Subpenas may be issued under the signature of the chairman of the committee or any subcommittee, or by any member designated by any such chairman, and may be served by any person designated by any such chairman or member.

\* \* \* \* \*

27. To assist the House in appraising the administration of the laws and in developing such amendments or related legislation as it may deem necessary, each standing committee of the House shall exercise continuous watchfulness of the execution by the administrative agencies concerned of any laws, the subject matter of which is within the jurisdiction of such committee; and, for that purpose, shall study all pertinent reports and data submitted to the House by the agencies in the executive branch of the Government.



## PREFACE

Rev. James H. Robinson, pastor emeritus of the Presbyterian Church of the Master, New York City, is director of Operation Crossroads Africa, Inc., 150 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. This privately financed organization, which was conceived by Mr. Robinson, operates a student exchange program between the United States and Africa. Its purpose is to build friendship and understanding between this country and African nations. It does this by enlisting the service of U.S. college students, of all races and creeds, who spend their summers in Africa as members of volunteer teams, living among the people, helping them build schools, teaching, coaching them in various sports, and working with them on numerous other projects designed to improve their living conditions.

U.S. college students who volunteer for this project are given orientation training, including instruction on communism and Communist tactics, prior to their overseas service.

Mr. Robinson is also a member of the National Advisory Council of the Peace Corps.

Because he has been associated in the past with organizations cited as Communist, questions have been raised concerning his Peace Corps position, and he has also encountered some problems in connection with his Operation Crossroads Africa program.

In a letter addressed to the former chairman of this committee, requesting an opportunity to appear before the committee to testify concerning his past ties with cited Communist and Communist-front organizations and also his present position on communism, Mr. Robinson wrote:

Because of continuing difficulties which interfere with the service I render to this country, I should like the opportunity of an interview or a hearing in the hopes that the Committee will help clear up the records. \* \* \*

The committee first contacted Mr. Robinson to arrange his appearance in June 1963. Because of the pressure of other committee business and also because of Mr. Robinson's commitments which involved trips abroad, a mutually convenient date for his appearance could not be found until almost a year later.

In his appearance before the committee on May 5, 1964, Mr. Robinson was asked questions concerning all officially cited or Communist-tinged groups with which, according to public accounts, he had at any time been affiliated. He answered all questions without resorting to constitutional privilege.

Mr. Robinson testified that he was not and had never been a member of the Communist Party. He also stated that in the past he had believed in supporting and working with Communists when they were ostensibly working for things in which he believed—peace, civil rights, and similar goals. He also testified, however, that his position

on this subject had changed during the post-World War II years and that he no longer held this view.

After explaining how he had become associated with several Communist or Communist-front organizations in the late thirties and early forties, Mr. Robinson was asked if his basic position or attitude at that time was that he would support an activity in which Communists were involved if he felt it served a cause he was interested in. He replied:

I did in those days. I would not do it now. With age and experience, you learn a good many other things. But in those things, when I had just come to the Church of the Master and was involved in a great many things in the Harlem community, I did not make the same distinctions that I would now.

At another point in his testimony, Mr. Robinson was asked whether, as advertised, he had been a speaker at a Forum for Victory sponsored by a Communist Party club in New York City in 1943. He said he did not definitely recall the event, but that he might have addressed the forum and—

if I spoke, and I may have spoken, it would have been because I was working strongly then with a great many Jewish groups against anti-semitism. I would have spoken only for that reason and under those circumstances.

\* \* \* \* \*

I would say that at that time I believed if I could utilize the Communist Party for things that I believed in, although I knew it was a hazardous pursuit to try to do so, that I should try to do that.

Mr. Robinson gave several examples of anti-Communist activities he had undertaken in recent years. In 1941, he had organized the African Academy of Art and Research in New York City, which was designed to serve as a hospitality center for African students studying in the United States. In the post-World War II years, when he learned that the Council on African Affairs,<sup>1</sup> which he described as "a decided front organization," was attempting to involve African students in the United States in Communist activities, he utilized the African Academy of Art and Research to offset the operations of the Council on African Affairs.

He also referred to the fact that he had written a pamphlet *Love of This Land* at the request of Donald Stone, former Director of the Mutual Security Agency. This pamphlet, published in 1956, pointed out the progress that had been made in the United States in the area of race relations. It was designed to assist U.S. Government personnel serving overseas, particularly those working in Asia, in replying to criticisms about racial matters in the United States made by Communists and others.

<sup>1</sup> The Council on African Affairs was cited as Communist and subversive by Attorney General Tom Clark in 1947 and 1948.

Describing the training given voluntary workers in his Operations Crossroads Africa project, Mr. Robinson testified:

We give great attention to this whole area in Crossroads when our people meet at Douglas College for Women at Rutgers for 7 days for their final preparation. We indicate what types of groups in the various countries of Africa might be leftwing or Communist and how they can answer them effectively and how they are going to avoid being pushed into a corner.

\* \* \* \* \*

We spend the whole day with the kind of problems they were going to face, what they should be reading, set up some potential situations that they might face, and help them to work out some of the answers, because they are going to be challenged all along the line, and especially by the leftwing students or the Communists.

This is going to be more of a problem in the years to come, because the great wave of African students who have gone to [East] Germany or Moscow or Peking or Poland is just now this summer beginning to come back in any significant numbers. In 4 to 5 years that wave will reach its peak.

So we are trying to prepare our young people and our leaders, too, in what they can do to win an audience and get people to go along with them and see their view rather than just winning a battle.

Referring to leaders of the civil rights movement in the United States who believe (as he does) that people can "logically" be civilly disobedient at times, Mr. Robinson stated:

\* \* \* it is the obligation of the person who takes this stand to purge out of their ranks the kind of people who do not take it for the same good reasons of conscience and who try to use it to another advantage or infiltrate the movement for Communist ends.

This is their responsibility to do this. They cannot hide under the fact that our cause is so good and our situation is so desperate that we will accept anybody on a brotherhood front movement to come in and help us.

That will include Malcolm X, the Communists, and a good many other people with whom I would not agree under these circumstances. So I think the best thing to do is to prepare the minds of young people about what communism is and help them to face it.

When asked to state approximately when it was that his position on supporting or cooperating with Communists or Communist fronts had changed, Mr. Robinson replied:

I think my position on these matters began to change in the middle 1940's toward the end of the war and were solidified, I would say, by 1949-1950, when I took a whole new position which I referred to previously. After I took that

trip abroad for the Presbyterian Church in 1951 and 1952 to see who was winning the minds of young people and learned a good many more things outside of this country that I had not learned while I was in it—although I had learned a good many things about communism in this country—I think my change was completed.

At a subsequent point in his testimony, Mr. Ichord asked Mr. Robinson the following question:

You stated in your testimony that back when you were associated with Mr. Robeson and Ben Davis and others in several causes, that at that time you were of the mind that you would join with a Communist or anyone who was working for the objectives that you had in mind, and then later on you changed your mind. I would like for you to elaborate somewhat upon that.

Mr. Robinson replied:

Well, I came to the place where you have to recognize, first of all, that you might do your cause and yourself more harm, if you joined with people who are better organized than you are, and better disciplined in a group than you have, and their great asset is tight discipline.

They know where they are going and what they want to do. They can play it easy or soft. They can sit in a meeting that everyone leaves, as long as there is a quorum, and they will get the votes. I saw this happen many times at first without knowing what was happening. I learned, but some people never did learn.

I do not think it would be to my advantage, for example, in Operation Crossroads Africa to let a Black Muslim come into Operation Crossroads Africa. I must admit one got in from the University of California at Berkeley, but we put him on a plane from Africa, when we found out about it, and sent him home.

I would say the same thing about Communists. I would not let Communists in either. Now, would I let them cooperate with us on anything? No, I would not take that old position of cooperating any more. I would not get involved with people with ulterior motives who really end up trying to use you to make capital for their ends.

Additional testimony by Mr. Robinson will be found in part 2 of the committee's hearings on the Freedom Academy bills.



# TESTIMONY OF REV. JAMES H. ROBINSON

TUESDAY, MAY 5, 1964

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES,  
*Washington, D.C.*

EXECUTIVE SESSION <sup>1</sup>

A subcommittee of the Committee on Un-American Activities met, pursuant to call, at 10:10 a.m., in Room 226, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C., Hon. William M. Tuck (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

(Subcommittee members: Representatives William M. Tuck, of Virginia; Richard H. Ichord, of Missouri; and Henry C. Schadeberg, of Wisconsin.)

Subcommittee members present: Representatives Tuck, Ichord, and Schadeberg.

Staff members present: Francis J. McNamara, director, and Donald T. Appell, chief investigator.

Mr. TUCK. The subcommittee will come to order.

Do I hear a motion that the witness be heard in executive session?

Mr. ICHORD. I move that he be heard in executive session.

Mr. SCHADEBERG. I second the motion.

Mr. TUCK. Those in favor, "aye." Opposed, "no."

The "ayes" have it.

It has been moved and voted unanimously that the committee will hear this witness in executive session.

I will now read an order from the chairman of the committee establishing the subcommittee:

APRIL 30, 1964.

TO: FRANCIS J. MCNAMARA,  
*Director, Committee on Un-American Activities.*

Rev. James H. Robinson having requested the privilege of appearing as a witness before the Committee, I, pursuant to the policy and Rules of this Committee, hereby appoint a subcommittee of the Committee on Un-American Activities, consisting of Hon. William M. Tuck as Chairman, and Hon. Richard Ichord and Hon. Henry C. Schadeberg as Associate Members, to receive his testimony in Washington, D.C., commencing on or about Tuesday, May 5, 1964, and/or at such other times thereafter and places as said subcommittee shall determine.

Please make this action a matter of Committee record.

If any member indicates his inability to serve, please notify me.

Given under my hand this 30th day of April, 1964.

/s/ Edwin E. Willis,  
EDWIN E. WILLIS,

*Chairman, Committee on Un-American Activities.*

<sup>1</sup> Released by the committee and ordered to be printed.

Now, I believe we are ready to proceed with the identification of the witness and counsel.

(At this point the witness and his counsel entered the hearing room.)

Mr. TUCK. Will you stand and raise your right hand?

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. ROBINSON. I so swear.

Mr. McNAMARA. Mr. Chairman, I believe the record should reflect that Dr. Robinson is appearing before the subcommittee this morning as a result of an inquiry sent to him approximately a year ago. At that time, the committee extended to him the opportunity to comment on certain material contained in the committee's files. This was done because he had previously been in touch with the committee, requesting an opportunity to testify on this matter. Dr. Robinson extended his appreciation to the committee in reply to this letter. Mr. Appell, our chief investigator, subsequently got in touch with him to discuss this. It was only because of his own commitments, a busy schedule, as well as the committee's, that this hearing has not been held earlier. This was the first date we could find that was convenient to both parties.

Mr. TUCK. All right, proceed.

#### TESTIMONY OF REV. JAMES H. ROBINSON, ACCOMPANIED BY COUNSEL, WILFRED MAIS

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, Would you, for the sake of the record, give the committee some information on your background, the date and place of your birth, education, and your major employments.

Mr. ROBINSON. I was born in Knoxville, Tenn., in 1907. The family moved to Cleveland in 1917. I went to elementary school in Youngstown and Cleveland, Ohio, and high school. I went to Lincoln University where I graduated in 1935, then to Union Theological Seminary where I graduated in 1938. Before I graduated I was ordained by the Presbytery of Cleveland as a minister and began a church and a community center in the Harlem community [New York City] the same year.

At the same time, I did some work for the NAACP developing their youth program and then stayed at that church as its pastor 23½ years until the 15th of October 1962, when I left it because, prior to that time I had begun—in 1951 and 1952—an 8-month trip in Asia for the Presbyterian Church to do several things. One, to see who was having the biggest influence on the minds of students and, secondly, to lay the foundation for a program called Spend Your Junior Year Abroad in an Asian or Middle East University.

And during that time I did some voluntary things for our Ambassador in India at that time and the consul general at Hong Kong and the American occupation people in Germany, since I was on this trip at the time of the first so-called Neo-German Youth Conference in Berlin.

In 1954, I started Operation Crossroads Africa, which I give my full time to now—the reasons for that I can give later, if the committee cares to hear that—which began for the purpose of taking students at

the grassroots level to do work in Africa. That has been going on and increasing and I give my full time to that now.

Mr. McNAMARA. Have you held, or do you hold, any posts with the United States Government or a Government agency?

Mr. ROBINSON. I serve on the Advisory Committee of the State Department for Africa and am Vice Chairman—I am not quite sure what I am now—to the Advisory Council to the Peace Corps. But now that President Johnson is no longer the Chairman of the Council, I suppose, except in fact of name I am no longer Vice Chairman, we have not had any meetings, but I still serve on that committee.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, I neglected to have you identify your counsel before. Would you do that please.

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes. I have asked a friend, Attorney Wilfred Mais, who has been in many similar local hearings as a result of this record, with me, through the years, to come along with me. He is an attorney in New York and was chairman of the board of directors of the Morningside Community Center, which I neglected to say, I also founded. It works with about 4,000 underprivileged children simultaneously with the church but who were not church members. We ran a camp in Winchester, New Hampshire. He was chairman of the board of the Morningside Community which I directed for a number of years. He served on that board for a number of years.

I am no longer associated with the church, except as pastor emeritus, and the rule says when a minister is too old or infirm to shepherd the flock he may retire with or without salary. They did not give me any salary as pastor emeritus.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, would you give more details about Operation Crossroads Africa, what the organization has done, is doing today, and its major purpose.

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes. After I set up the Junior Year Abroad Program, or helped to set it up, by doing the ground work for it in Asia, groups of students from the University of California in Los Angeles; Oklahoma A&M, at Stillwater; and Syracuse, began projects of taking students out to Asia.

Then I went to Africa in 1954 for the first time on money supplied from a Jewish family, *Life* magazine, and from *Presbyterian Life* magazine to explore the possibility of involving groups of young people from the United States when they are still in college, at the grassroots level, for three major purposes:

First, to try to build a good image of the United States in Africa and to relate to African students who are going into leadership positions.

Secondly, to have each of these students when they come back, to become interested in working in Africa. We did not care whether it was for missions or State Department or USIS or AID or whether it was in education or business, but we felt if you got a group of tough-minded young people and involved them at the grassroots level for a summer under very difficult conditions—and we say it is neither a tourist joyride nor an African safari—that they will do great good for America. Each student has to raise part of his own money—as much as he can. They have to read 20 books in a semester, write a term

paper, be prepared to live simply in the rainy season, not in a big city, and to give a good witness for what we believe.

We hoped they would go into African studies later on. That has paid off. Of those who have gone, 30 percent are back in Africa. The Peace Corps has a telegram waiting for every leader when he returns to the United States asking them if they would not like to work for them in Africa. Seventeen are in various positions with State, through ICA or AID or various other services of the U.S. Government. Some are in education in the universities and colleges and some are working for the African governments. This summer we will be at work in 21 countries, of East, West, and Central Africa.

Now we do this by utilizing the work-camp technique of going into a village, building a little school, a maternity clinic, a road, a well, or doing youth-and-sports projects, with hundreds of young people developing a physical education program. Sometimes we have taken teachers who have experience in teaching here to help upgrade the teachers of Africa. Eighty percent of the teachers of Africa have less than an eighth grade education. But they are good people and if the people who teach them will have the patience to work with them—not Ph. D.'s from the universities and colleges, because they do not talk the same language as African teachers who have not gone to school—but if you get a good primary or high school teacher from Washington, Philadelphia, and New York, and you get four or five hundred of their teachers who have not gone very far, you can do amazing things with them. We do not get very far unless we do a great deal with 80 percent of the people who carry 90 percent of the load, unless we help to upgrade them.

Mr. SCHADEBERG. What would you consider to be the difference in the Peace Corps work and the Operation Crossroads Africa?

Mr. ROBINSON. The essential differences are that the Peace Corps is long-term and we are short-term. We take students who are still in college, mainly, although we do take some teachers, doctors, and nurses for more professional purposes as we are asked in East Nigeria, by the Minister of Health. But most of those we are taking this summer are your young people. They will do most of the things that the Peace Corps does except most Peace Corps people are out of school and ours are not. Our idea is to utilize the students to show our belief in the people overseas to teach what self-help is, and how we can help them by sharing with them and then prepare these students with a knowledge of Africa and a desire to go into African studies permanently and be useful in many other ways.

These are the chief differences. We are kind of a feeder for Peace Corps. If you do not mind my saying it, sometimes I say that they ought to give us some money for building a reservoir for them, or to help us, because we are entirely non-Government and voluntary and so many Crossroaders go into the Peace Corps.

We think also that voluntary organizations have another dimension in this whole democratic framework we are trying to get across, as an idea to the people. And equally important, in some aspects, is this idea as a non-Government-aided project. Because when they can see students like boys from Georgetown washing cars to raise money to send five students, and girls from Wellesley baby-sitting to help

their colleagues go to Africa; that means more than saying we have a big grant to send our people out to Africa.

Mr. TUCK. Are members of your organization paid?

Mr. ROBINSON. It costs about \$1,700 per person. We give everybody we accept \$700 right off, except where the family can afford to pay the whole thing and wants to. We ask the students to try to get \$1,000 for the privilege of being involved in this as an identification and an indication of their interest. But we have to give scholarships anywhere from \$300 to \$500, but everybody has to pay something. They raise the money. They go to the Rotary Club or the Kiwanis or a women's group in the church or to the synagogue and they get help and assistance that way.

Mr. SCHADEBERG. Is there anything you can do in Crossroads that you cannot do in the Peace Corps?

Mr. ROBINSON. We can move in many areas with a great deal less suspicion than the Peace Corps. For example, when I was in Guinea, and we were having great difficulty, we got Crossroads in 2 years before the Peace Corps could get in.

In 1962, I had a long talk with President Touré and his cabinet—July 1962, after which he asked me to wait outside. He said, "I am going to cable the President and Sargent Shriver about bringing the Peace Corps in and I hope you will do the same."

I had to leave and go to Accra and from the Embassy in Accra I cabled Sargent Shriver. I told them I had had this conference and would be willing to go back, if I could be of service. So now Peace Corps is in. For example, we are going to be in Mali this year. They have not let us in for 3 years. They really thought we were not a bona fide non-Government organization and that we had Government support by the back door and were trying to fool them. They have asked us to bring a basketball team and four experienced coaches in youth and sports, in boxing, wrestling, field and track. We will, therefore, be working with about 3,000 young people whom the ministry of youth, sports and culture will get together. We selected good athletes, but we also select people who can, in the evenings when you are sitting down talking with people, also make a good witness for the kind of thing we want to get across as far as ideas are concerned as well. The only difficulty with this problem is we had to go out and ask special people to come. When you do that, you cannot say, "You get \$1,000 of it" because they say, "You really want me to go and do this, don't you?" They say, "I don't have any money and I have not got time to raise money."

A lot of people say, "Why send a basketball team?" Sports are the big thing—especially if you send young people who make the biggest impact on African youth who are going to have the greatest influence in Africa.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, could you express briefly what your work with the Peace Corps has involved? What have you done in your role as a member of the Advisory Council?

Mr. ROBINSON. One summer when I was in Africa, I did a sounding for them. First, what are the attitudes of European expatriates about the Peace Corps. Second, what is the attitude, as far as I could get it, of business people from other countries, mainly Europeans? Thirdly, what is the attitude of people in power? Fourth, to see as

many of the people in the opposition movements as I could and to do a confidential report about them, which I did one summer and sent it back. I found it did not turn out to be confidential, however, because it got back to a lot of people in Africa after I had written it up.

Then I helped in advising on the selection of certain personnel for certain areas. Some I have approved enthusiastically. Some I have said, I think it would be a mistake to take, especially if I knew them well from Crossroads experiences. So I have had some advisory capacity in this and I have worked on how to get more Negro personnel for the Peace Corps, which is, of course, a problem. However, I have not been limited, mainly, to that.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you receive any compensation from the U.S. Government for your services?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, no compensation.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, it is the committee's belief that to best serve the purpose of the request you have made we should ask you in considerable detail about some of your past activities that have been brought up. Some of the organizations with which you have been affiliated have been officially cited as Communist and others have not, but in the committee's view, all of the organizations I will mention, in one way or the other, were influenced by Communists. We would like to ask you about these activities, how you became associated with them, and so forth, and give you an opportunity to explain your situation.

I think that perhaps the first question we should ask of you is: Have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. ROBINSON. I have never been a member of the Communist Party.

Mr. McNAMARA. The United Youth Committee Against Lynching was cited as a Communist front by this committee in 1944. The *Daily Workers* of February 10 and 11, 1938, both on page 5, featured articles which told of a mass rally which would be held at the conclusion of an anti-lynch parade in the Harlem section of New York on February 11, 1938. These articles revealed that this rally and these parades were under the auspices of the United Youth Committee Against Lynching and that, participating in the function, were the Young Communist League, the Communist Party, the Workers Alliance, the International Workers Order, and the Transport Workers Union—all of which have been cited as Communist organizations<sup>1</sup>—and also some non-Communist groups.

I was wondering if you recall this incident? It was quite a few years back, of course. But if you do recall it, could you tell the committee how it was you became involved in this. These two *Daily Worker* items I mentioned, by the way, mentioned the fact that you were a speaker at the mass rally at the conclusion of this parade.

Mr. ROBINSON. I am not quite sure that I remember whether I spoke at the parade, but I do remember helping to sponsor that meeting. I think at the time, if I did not speak, I would have spoken, if there was not something that stood in the way of some other obligation and responsibility. I am not sure I did, but I would have, I think, if I had

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<sup>1</sup> TWU leaders opposed the election of Communists to office in the union and defeated the Communist slate.

been there. My concern was, at the time, in 1938—I was also the director of the youth activities for the NAACP on a part-time basis before I got out of theological seminary and all through my first year and a half as founder of the Church of the Master, which I began the first Sunday in May of 1938.

I would have gone primarily because of my desire to stand against lynching and at that time possibly nobody else except the NAACP was doing that. I made it clear that I was not a Communist, even though I did participate in things like this.

Mr. McNAMARA. To the best of your recollection, did you know at that time that these Communist groups were participating in the parade and rally?

Mr. ROBINSON. At that time I did not know they were Communist-controlled organizations.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would that apply to the Communist Party and the Young Communist League?

Mr. ROBINSON. That would not apply to the Communist Party and the Young Communist League.

Mr. McNAMARA. It is true that these other organizations were not cited, or that there was no official finding that they were Communist, until later years, but I was just wondering what your basic position or attitude was. Was it that you would support an activity in which Communists were involved if you felt it served a cause you were interested in? Would that be it?

Mr. ROBINSON. I did in those days. I would not do it now. With age and experience, you learn a good many other things. But in those things, when I had just come to the Church of the Master and was involved in a great many things in the Harlem community, I did not make the same distinctions that I would now.

Mr. McNAMARA. One of the *Daily Worker* items identified you as president, at the time, and the other as director, of the United Youth Neighborhood Center. Which was correct?

Mr. ROBINSON. Neither was correct. It was the Morningside Community Center which I founded and of which I was the director. They might have confused it with the West Harlem Council of Social Agencies which was one of 13 divisions of welfare councils in New York. I was a chairman at that time.

Mr. McNAMARA. The next items concern the Emergency Peace Mobilization Committee, which was cited by the Attorney General as Communist in 1942 and by this committee in 1944. The background of this group was that from 1935—with the launching of the United Front Against Fascism at the Comintern meeting in Moscow—until 1939, when Stalin signed a pact with Hitler, the Communist line was to do everything to oppose Hitler. As soon as the pact was signed in 1939, the Communist Party flipped completely and various organizations were set up with the idea of agitating and propagandizing to keep the United States out of the war in Europe. They opposed the draft, opposed defense preparations, opposed aid to England, France, and other nations which were opposing Nazi Germany.

The Emergency Peace Mobilization was one of these organizations. The letterhead of the Emergency Peace Mobilization Committee of Greater New York, dated July 15, 1940, lists Rev. James H. Robinson

as a sponsor of the group. Do you recall, Dr. Robinson, your association with this group and how it came about?

Mr. ROBINSON. It came about, I think, because at that time, or just before that time, when I was a student at Union Seminary, Dr. Harry F. Ward was involved in many of these peace groups. I trusted him as a teacher, number 1. I knew that he was a liberal and I did a good many things, along with some other students, and joined some committees, such as that one, to which I lent my name but never did much work for because I was founding the church, the community center, and a co-op store at the same time.

As I recollect, my interest in that and the League Against War and Fascism was first gained through Dr. Harry F. Ward.

Mr. McNAMARA. To the best of your recollection, it was he who did interest you in this and did influence you to serve as a sponsor of the organization?

Mr. ROBINSON. That is right.

Mr. McNAMARA. The next item concerns the Committee To Defend America by Keeping Out of War, an organization cited as Communist by this committee in 1944 and also serving the purpose of the party line during the Stalin-Hitler pact. A letterhead of this committee, dated August 10, 1940, lists as one of its sponsors the Rev. James Robinson, president of the Youth Section, NAACP. Do you recall being a sponsor of the Committee To Defend America By Keeping Out Of War?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall how it was you became involved with this group?

Mr. ROBINSON. I think I got involved because of work in the NAACP youth groups. We were associated with a good many other youth groups at the time and we were getting involved in many of these problems, which were political problems as well as inter-racial problems and problems about the community.

Mr. McNAMARA. This committee staged an "Emergency Peace Mobilization" at the Chicago Stadium from August 31 to September 2, 1940. That was over the Labor Day weekend and the *Daily Worker* of August 13, 1940, lists a number of "outstanding" leaders who had endorsed the Chicago mobilization and who are actively serving on the Committee To Defend America by Keeping Out of War. Listed here is the Rev. James Robinson as one of these persons.

Do you recall whether, as a sponsor of the Committee To Defend America by Keeping Out of War, you received a request to give your particular endorsement to the committee's mobilization, which was called the Emergency Peace Mobilization?

Mr. ROBINSON. I remember that vaguely. I do not know whether I received such a request or not. I do remember that this meeting was going to be held. I did not attend it. I was not an active member of the committee. I am sure I never went to one single meeting, except somewhere where I was going to be speaking for a church, college, or group.

Mr. McNAMARA. Another major front set up by the party during the period of the Stalin-Hitler pact was the American Peace Mobilization, which was cited by the Attorney General in 1942, by this committee the same year, and also by the Senate Internal Security Sub-



committee many years later, in 1956. The American Peace Mobilization was actually launched at the Emergency Peace Mobilization which I have just mentioned as being held in Chicago.

The Special Committee on Un-American Activities obtained the minutes of a meeting of the Executive Board of the New York Council of the American Peace Mobilization held on October 19, 1940. On page three of the meeting minutes, we find a notation that the Rev. James Robinson was nominated to the Executive Board of the New York Council of the American Peace Mobilization.

Were you aware of the fact that you had been so nominated within this organization and, if you do recall it and were aware of it, would you give the committee some information concerning this development.

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall being nominated. I know one thing. I never served and never went to a single meeting. I do not recall even getting an invitation to a meeting. This might have been like a good many things in which names were asked and used. I would be much more careful about letting my name be used now than in those days, although this is not the question you are asking.

Mr. McNAMARA. Again, relative to the American Peace Mobilization, I have here a mimeographed letter attacking the Lend-Lease bill. It is a letter of the National Religious Committee of the American Peace Mobilization and it lists the Rev. James Robinson as a member of the Religious Committee of the American Peace Mobilization.

Do you recall being approached to serve on the Religious Committee of the American Peace Mobilization, and if so, by whom?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not exactly recall who would have asked me to do that. It could have been any one of a number of people. Again, it would have been to lend my name more than anything else to it. I was actively engaged in as much opportunity as I could find against war and for peace, which I freely admit to. I do not recall who that would have been. It could have been any number of one of the other clergymen whose names and whose opinion and status I respected and who, I think, took the same position I did.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall whether or not Dr. Ward was also active in the American Peace Mobilization?

Mr. ROBINSON. Dr. Ward was active in almost every single one of the peace-proposed groups.

Mr. McNAMARA. During this period there were some other groups opposing America's entry into war, for example, the America First Committee. I wonder if you ever thought of lending your support to that group, as opposed to the American Peace Mobilization?

Mr. ROBINSON. They never asked me for one thing. I suppose I would have, for that same reason, loaned my name to it, although I did not agree with some of their other principles. I did a great many things if it was against lynching or for the betterment of the community, loaned my name to groups at that time whose whole purposes I did not agree with.

Mr. McNAMARA. Were you at all aware, Dr. Robinson, at the time, that the American Peace Mobilization was either Communist-controlled or influenced by Communists?

Mr. ROBINSON. I was not aware it was Communist-controlled. I did not know, in the beginning in most of these things, how many people in them were Communists. I found out later that there were

some Communists in it. I did not always resign from a committee, even though they were using my name, even when I found there were Communists in it, because I felt I should keep abreast of what they were thinking and it was a way to express my point of view.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did you find, when you were associated with some of these groups you had in mind when you made this last statement, that you could make statements of opposing points of view and have any influence on the organization—in the sense of undercutting their subservience to the Communist Party line?

Mr. ROBINSON. I did not convert anybody. Of that I am sure. On the other hand, sometimes I utilized the opportunity on a platform to make a position clear to people coming to a public meeting, but they never published this like they published all the other things.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall whether or not George Murphy, who was with the NAACP in New York in the 1930's and 1940's and whom you may have known, at any time influenced you to affiliate yourself with some of these organizations?

Mr. ROBINSON. George Murphy was my superior in the NAACP. He was on the national staff at that time, and I worked with him closely on a good many things. It was not for a couple of years that I began to have some suspicion of George Murphy myself, later on. But he was my superior in the NAACP.

Mr. McNAMARA. It was not until 1950, actually, that he was identified as a member of the party before this committee, but he has been so identified and we were wondering if he did influence you in any way for that reason.

Mr. TUCK. After you learned of the purposes of these various groups, have you at any time since then publicly repudiated them or disassociated yourself from them in any way?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes, on a number of occasions, which, unfortunately, do not get into the record. For example, one that has not come up yet is that group, Council on African Affairs, and I went out and organized—once I knew what they were doing—the African Academy of Art and Research in which Mr. Bundy participated. I got Governor Ball of Connecticut, and Mrs. Roosevelt, and others, to put up a house by City College [New York City] to begin doing constructive things with African students, because most of them were being involved through the Council of African Affairs, which was a decided front organization. I spoke about that many times, and it took a long time to get anybody to listen in New York to give us the money to do the opposite in the African Academy of Art and Research.

We opened a house on 144th Street to involve as many African students as we could in another whole concept.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, the *Daily Worker* of May 27, 1941, on pages one and five, featured a public statement which condemned the defense program of the United States and the war effort for restricting Negro rights and also the democratic liberties of the entire people. These articles listed as signers of this statement—and this was issued just a few weeks prior to Hitler's attack on Russia—the Rev. James H. Robinson of the Church of the Master. Do you recall who solicited your signature or your endorsement of this statement?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall who solicited my endorsement. I recall the statement and my interest was specifically in terms of Ne-

groes in the war effort that I thought they should have been given a greater opportunity, for example, and that was my basic interest.

Mr. McNAMARA. Could you tell me whether or not you were supplied in advance with the text of this statement before it was released?

Mr. ROBINSON. I would have to admit categorically in those days I was not always very wise and often I did not see these statements.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall whether or not, in this particular case, you did see this statement?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not really believe I did.

Mr. McNAMARA. The initiating group behind this statement included Ferdinand C. Smith, Doxey A. Wilkerson, and Paul Robeson, all of whom have since been identified as members of the Communist Party. I was wondering if you knew any of these men and recalled whether or not they might have approached you to sign this statement?

Mr. ROBINSON. It could have been Ferdinand C. Smith, because I was involved in a number of other community problems with him. He, at the time, was a member of the board of the West Council Associations, of which I was chairman, and working in. Doxey Wilkerson, I knew who he was. I was surprised later on to find some of the involvements and accusations made against him. Wasn't he at Howard University?

Mr. MAIS. Yes.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did you know Ferdinand C. Smith to be a Communist at any time while you had these contacts with him?

Mr. ROBINSON. I did not know him to be a Communist. I was not surprised when he had to leave the country, because I thought I could see some trends in that direction later on. But in the beginning I did not know him to be a Communist nor did I suspect him to be a Communist in the beginning when I first knew him.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, on June 21, 1941, Hitler attacked the Soviet Union, thus ending the Stalin-Hitler pact and also bringing about a reversal in Communist Party policy. It shifted then from peace and avoidance of war to just the opposite, all-out U.S. participation, aid to the allies, and so on, and shortly after that the *Daily Worker*, of September 28, 1941, featured a message sent to a meeting of anti-Nazi youth held in Moscow, pledging to the Soviet youth "our fullest support in their struggles to destroy Hitler." The *Daily Worker* item listed the Rev. James Robinson, Church of the Master, as one of the signers of this message. I was wondering if you recalled signing the message?

Mr. ROBINSON. I believe I signed that message.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would you have any comment to make on it? Do you recall who approached you to sign it? This message, apparently, was not sponsored or organized under any particular group, as far as the article indicated.

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall who would have asked me to do this. I do not recall the facts of who it would have been.

Mr. McNAMARA. Could you tell the committee how it is that just a few months prior to this time, and during the year or two prior to this time—in various activities of the Emergency Peace Mobilization, the American Peace Mobilization—you were opposing the idea of becoming involved in the war against Hitler but were now taking

the position that there should be intense, shall we say, anti-Nazi activity. "We must go all out in opposition to Nazi Germany."

Mr. ROBINSON. In my work with a lot of groups like the Hadassah and the United Jewish Women, I always had a strong anti-Hitler attitude. This change comes to me in the terms of more realization of where you stand in a very real world of force and of struggle and of power and evil, that you have to stand up against it and take another position.

That was the beginning which coincides with their change and this may have helped it some, I am quite honest to say. But it is where you have to stand. You can be for peace, but you have to be constructively for peace and sometimes that means you have to purchase it sometimes with your own life.

Mr. McNAMARA. To some extent it would be Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union that woke you up to this view?

Mr. ROBINSON. I would not say it was Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union by itself, alone, that woke me up to it. I had all these problems in my own mind that I struggled with during this period. I wanted to be a pacifist, but could never bring myself to really be a pacifist. I wanted to, but I could not. I would like to do it now, but I cannot.

Mr. TUCK. We will take a short recess.

(Short recess.)

Mr. TUCK. You may proceed now.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, in the *New York Herald-Tribune*, issue of October 27, 1942, page 13, there was published a petition sponsored by Kenneth Leslie, the editor of the *Protestant*. This petition stated that in response to the request of "our sorely pressed" Russian allies for a new Western front, the signers were calling upon— anti-Fascist nations to make open and outright and immediate war upon all Fascist nations and to attack at once all these points of power whose "neutrality" is the mere option by the Axis to be taken up at its convenience.

The name of the Rev. James H. Robinson of New York appears as one of the signers.

Do you recall giving your endorsement to this petition, or signing the petition?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do.

Mr. McNAMARA. And the circumstances surrounding it?

Mr. ROBINSON. I knew Kenneth Leslie. That was an Episcopal magazine, I think, if my recollection is correct. I knew him and a good many other ministers with whom I was associated at that time, and he would have asked me to sign that statement, I am sure.

Mr. McNAMARA. The *Protestant*<sup>1</sup> magazine, formerly known as *Protestant Digest*, was cited as a Communist-front publication by this committee in 1944 and by the Internal Security Subcommittee of the Senate in 1956. I was wondering if, at the time you gave your endorsement to this petition, you actually had given much thought to the gist of its message. For example, its call for a new Western front, and so forth. At this point, the United States military leaders were opposed to this idea. We were not ready for it. Russia was pushing for it

<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Leslie's magazine, the *Protestant*, had no official status with the Episcopal Church or any other Protestant denomination.

very hard. Did Mr. Leslie, perhaps, speak to you on this matter, and convince you that this was necessary as a step in winning the war?

Mr. ROBINSON. I would say that in those years I was not as alert to military necessities as I would be now. He did not convince me on this. I do not think he talked to me very long about it, as a matter of fact.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall if you actually saw this petition before it was published, or whether he contacted you and asked you to give your signature, your endorsement, and described to you, perhaps, in a general way, what the petition would allegedly contain or say?

Mr. ROBINSON. If I had read all of these petitions, sometimes I would not have signed them. Most of the time they did not bring in the petition. They asked you, on a matter of friendship and association basis, would you be willing to go along and they gave you the basic ideas which they thought you would be in agreement with.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would you say then, Dr. Robinson, that in giving your assent to having your name appear on a considerable number of these documents you were actually misled to some extent by the people who approached you?

Mr. ROBINSON. I have no doubt about that.

Mr. McNAMARA. The next item concerns the American Labor Party, which was cited as Communist by this committee in 1944 and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee in 1956.

By the end of 1942, of course, the Communists who, a year before or a little more, had violently opposed it, were demanding a second front. The *Daily Worker* of April 11, 1943, reported that the New York County Committee of the American Labor Party had announced plans for a series of meetings to demand the opening of a second front. This article listed you as a proposed speaker for the first of these meetings, which was to be held on April 15 of that year, 1942. The *Daily Worker* of April 15, the date of that meeting, also reported that you were a speaker, or were to be a speaker, that day. Do you recall this incident? Do you recall whether or not you did speak at this affair?

Mr. ROBINSON. I am not sure about that one.

Mr. McNAMARA. Were you aware at the time that the American Labor Party was considered to be under Communist control?

Mr. ROBINSON. In the beginning, I was not aware of that.

Mr. McNAMARA. Could you tell the committee approximately when you became aware of it, or began to suspect Communist control of the American Labor Party?

Mr. ROBINSON. What was that date again of this one?

Mr. McNAMARA. This was April 15, 1942.

Mr. ROBINSON. I cannot honestly recall when I became aware of the Communist infiltration in that party. To be perfectly honest about it, I cannot recall when I did become aware of this.

Mr. McNAMARA. As I recall, you stated that you were uncertain about this meeting, whether you actually spoke at it or not.

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not think I spoke at the meeting.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall being approached to speak at the meeting, and if so, who approached you?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not know who would have approached me but I got approached on many occasions to speak at meetings most of which I did not and sometimes could not do.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, in 1943, the Soviet Union executed Polish Socialist trade union leaders, Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich. There were widespread protests against this action, particularly among labor circles throughout the world, and a New York City rally was held to protest it and to condemn it. The *Daily Worker* of March 30, 1943, and of April 1, 1943, both reported that 50 New York civic leaders had endorsed a statement upholding the action of the Soviet Union in executing these two men and condemning other citizens in New York who had called a rally to protest what many people felt was actually a cold-blooded murder.

In both these issues of the *Daily Worker* the name of the Rev. James H. Robinson was listed as one of the signers of the statement. Do you recall the incident and whether or not you gave your name as endorsing this statement?

Mr. ROBINSON. In this case, I am positive I did not give my name in endorsing this statement.

Mr. McNAMARA. To the best of your recollection, you were never approached to do so—or would you say that you refused and your name was used without your permission?

Mr. ROBINSON. If they approached me in a case like this, I would have refused. I do not recall whether I was asked to do this or not. As a matter of fact, I am unfamiliar with these two names.

Mr. ICHORD. May I ask, since you were doing a considerable amount of speaking, did you usually require an honorarium for most of your speaking?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, for most of my speaking I never received an honorarium and to this day I do not have a fee for speaking anywhere.

Mr. ICHORD. Go ahead, Mr. McNamara.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, the Citizens' Committee of the Upper West Side—that is the upper west side of New York City—was cited as Communist by the Attorney General in 1947. The *Daily Worker* of July 4, 1943, published a statement signed by many people. This statement protested what it called anti-Soviet propaganda. It condemned the "scandalous, irresponsible attacks on the motion picture 'Mission to Moscow'" and it claimed that this anti-Soviet propaganda—which, it implied, was prevalent in the United States—was delaying the opening of a second front in Europe and prolonging the war. The *Daily Worker* listed the Rev. James H. Robinson as one of the signers of this statement.

Do you recall this incident and, if so, who solicited your support of this statement?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall the incident. I do know that the Citizens' Committee of the Upper West Side, in which I was involved, was made up of a number of people at that time from Union Seminary, Columbia, and a few from the Jewish Seminary, Columbia University and other local organizations.

Later on, I became aware that the same names kept on appearing in a good many of these organizations and groups. I do not know who it would have been who recruited me. I used the word "recruit" in another way, not that I was recruited for the party. It would have

been some of the people that live on the hill where I still live. If it was anyone at all, it might have been a professor from Columbia, Dr. Gene Weltfish or one of the other people up there at Columbia.

Mr. McNAMARA. I was just wondering—I'm skimming these names to see, if Dr. Weltfish was a signer. I do not see her name here. Do you recall this statement or not?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall that particular statement. I know that on a number of occasions I protested, but it did not do any good, to both the *People's Voice* at that time and also the *Daily Worker* that my name was often used without my consent.

Mr. McNAMARA. Has it ever come to your attention, Dr. Robinson, that any of the people that you have mentioned knowing—I am thinking of Ferdinand Smith and others—who were subsequently identified as Communist Party members, that some of them might have used your name or given your name to some cause without your specific permission?

Mr. ROBINSON. It came to my attention sometimes but not in connection with particular people who might have used my name. I would assume it would come from somebody I was associated with, perhaps Ferdinand C. Smith with whom I once worked on some committees. And I have no doubt that later on they did do that.

Mr. McNAMARA. But as far as you know, however, there is no case in which someone did use your name in some Communist-front organization without your permission, that is?

Mr. ROBINSON. I know of cases where my name was used where I did not sign something or where they said I went to speak and I did not go to speak. But who did it, I do not know.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, the American Committee To Save Refugees was cited as a Communist front by this committee in 1944. A number of similar committees were set up by the Communists in this country during this period, as Hitler advanced, of course, and overran France and other countries. There were many, many refugees who had to be taken care of and saved. This was obviously a humanitarian cause. The party, though, was primarily concerned with saving Communists. It was for this reason that it set up organizations such as the American Committee To Save Refugees. It was the purpose of these groups to raise funds and to bring about legislation and so forth that would enable these people to come to the United States. I have here a number of letterheads and items, literature, of the American Committee To Save Refugees which list Rev. James H. Robinson as a member of the executive board of the organization.

Do you recall serving in that capacity with the American Committee To Save Refugees?

Mr. ROBINSON. I was interested, at that time, in a great many refugees. I also served with Rabbi Stephen S. Wise on another committee at the same time, and Mrs. William S. Korn. We were concerned about rescue work for Jewish refugees.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall which committee that was?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not have the name of the committee, but Rabbi Wise had established a committee and set up a program and a house down by his synagogue on East 63d Street to receive many of these people and to give support to them. I was concerned about all

refugees. I was not just concerned about refugees from Communist countries.

Mr. McNAMARA. At the time you were associated with the organization, did you have any knowledge or belief that it was a Communist front organization set up to serve the Communist cause?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, I did not.

Mr. McNAMARA. And you do not recall, in this case, specifically who requested you to participate in this group?

Mr. ROBINSON. I went over this with Mr. Appell, who was kind enough to give me copies of it. We circled the names of the people I would have known and was associated with on these committees who might have gotten in touch with me. I would like to look at it and see—if I could look at the list of the names of the people.

Mr. McNAMARA. I have the list in the exhibits here which I will hand to you so you can inspect them.

Mr. ROBINSON. I have seen most of them. The main thing is the list. This is the list here, isn't it?

Mr. McNAMARA. Yes.

Mr. ROBINSON. I will just run down this. There was Rabbi Alper, Rufus Clement, who was president of Atlanta University; Kenneth Leslie, of course Bishop Francis McConnell, William Nielson, Charles Weber, who had been on the faculty at Union Seminary when I was there. Those would have been the people I knew and the people who probably I would have talked with.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, during the period of your association with the American Committee To Save Refugees was it the policy of that committee to submit to members of the executive board copies of all statements that the committee released prior to their release?

Mr. ROBINSON. It is my impression that this was not the case usually and that very few meetings were ever held.

Mr. McNAMARA. I asked that because I see here one public statement issued by the committee in which it says:

We must speak out all the more firmly now, because of the involvement of the Soviet Union in the war.

Do you recall ever having seen that statement before?

Mr. ROBINSON. Before I signed it?

Mr. McNAMARA. Before now. Or do you recall ever having seen the statement? It does not indicate that you signed it, just that it was a statement of the committee.

Mr. ROBINSON. In connection with these reports, of activities of associations, I have seen previous to this time, I do not know whether that was one of those that I voluntarily answered and notarized and sent to the State Department and the Un-American Activities Committee sometime previously or not.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, the next question concerns the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom, cited as a Communist front by this committee in 1942. In 1939 a committee of the New York State Legislature known as the Rapp-Coudert committee, initiated hearings to determine the extent of Communist and subversive activities in the public educational institutions of the city of New York. The *Daily Worker* of April 10, 1940, page five, reported that a citizens rally to answer the attack on public education, would be held April 13, under the auspices of the American Committee for Democ-



racy and Intellectual Freedom. The item also mentioned the fact that a group of sponsors of this rally had signed a communication to the mayor of New York City, condemning his action in removing from the budget an appropriation for a City College professorship for Bertrand Russell. It lists the Rev. James H. Robinson as one of the signers. In addition, a printed announcement of the citizens' rally lists the Rev. James H. Robinson as a sponsor of the meeting. This meeting was held in Carnegie Hall, April 13, 1940. Do you recall signing the statement just mentioned and sponsoring the meeting of that date?

Mr. ROBINSON. I recall signing that statement and sponsoring the meeting.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall who approached you to give your support to these activities?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall who that was.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would you recall, approximately, the approach they made to you, how they couched their appeal? Did they tell you that academic freedom was being destroyed by this committee, or public education was being weakened, or what was the approach?

Mr. ROBINSON. On my own initiative I kept up with that committee. There were some things I was opposed to about their methods and procedures, that I thought were detrimental, especially in our own community where if somebody made a stand on some things contrary to their point of view, they always assumed, illogically at the beginning, that he was a Communist or a Communist-front sympathizer. I was opposed to some actions of the committee and the way it was working in New York and especially in relationship to my own community.

Mr. McNAMARA. Are you aware of any instances in which this Rapp-Coudert committee unjustly attacked any teachers or employees of the New York City Board of Education as Communists, or if the New York City Board of Education unjustly fired anyone as a Communist as a result of the hearings?

Mr. ROBINSON. I knew that some people that I knew and trusted in the Harlem community who were called before the committee and who had a liberal position and who had joined a lot of things, as I had, and whom they assumed were Communists. I do not think they were given a fair hearing. I did not think they had on their staff people who could assess the whole Negro community and how you get involved in a good many of these things when nobody is fighting for those causes.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you know whether any of these persons you have reference to were actually identified as members of the Communist Party, by witnesses before the committee?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, the people I had in mind, and who I was concerned about, were people I was convinced were not Communists and were never cited as such.

Mr. McNAMARA. Were they cited by the committee, that you know, and did they suffer any penalties such as dismissal?

Mr. ROBINSON. They did not suffer the penalties of dismissal, but they suffered a great deal in many other occasions, as I myself have suffered, because many people have assumed since I did some of these

things, I was a Communist or a fellow traveler, neither of which I have been.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you think it unfair, Doctor—I am trying to get an objective view of this whole situation—for a committee, shall we say, or for private citizens, to become somewhat suspicious of an individual when the public record indicates he has been associated with Communist causes?

Mr. ROBINSON. I think it is logical that people looking at a long document of involvement could arrive at that conclusion. My own hope would be that they would be willing to assay the facts and find out the reasons why, and then look at the outside of the record which is what bothers me sometimes.

Mr. McNAMARA. That is one of the problems we face with communism. If a man has a long record of supporting Boy Scout functions, we can conclude pretty logically and certainly that he is an endorser and supporter of the Boy Scouts. Only with Communist fronts it is a different matter because, by their very definition, they have what Communists call “innocents” in them, people they have duped into supporting the organization. By the same token, however, they also have Communists in them. This is one of the difficulties we have faced in this country for 20 or 30 years or more—finding out who is who or who is which. Congressional committees face it, State legislative subcommittees, and security agencies.

Mr. ROBINSON. I submit this is a difficult problem.

(At this point Mr. Tuck left the hearing room.)

Mr. ICHORD. Proceed, Mr. McNamara.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, the New York Conference for Inalienable Rights was cited as Communist by this committee in 1944. It was one of the groups active in New York during the period of the Rapp-Coudert investigations, which opposed that investigation. The *Daily Worker* of November 11, 1940, page five, reported that:

A conference against the attempt to curb educational facilities in New York State and to limit the civil rights of teachers by the Rapp-Coudert Investigating Committee will be held \* \* \*.

It listed a number of individuals who reportedly had agreed to sponsor the meeting, and it lists the Rev. James H. Robinson as one of them. This conference was held in the Hotel Pennsylvania in New York City on November 19, 1940, under the sponsorship of The New York Conference for Inalienable Rights.

Do you recall this event and whether or not you did support the meeting?

Mr. ROBINSON. I think I supported the meeting but I do not believe I was there.

Mr. McNAMARA. The letterhead of the New York Conference for Inalienable Rights, dated November 25, 1941, about a year later, lists the Rev. James H. Robinson as a member of its State Advisory Council. To the best of your recollection, did you serve on the State Advisory Council of the New York Conference for Inalienable Rights?

Mr. ROBINSON. I did not. I never went to a single meeting, if they had any meetings.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall who solicited your support for the conference held at the Hotel Pennsylvania on November 19, which we have just mentioned?

Mr. ROBINSON. Do you have a list there, again?

I hate to take the committee's time to do this.

Mr. McNAMARA. There are quite a few names and the *Daily Worker* also lists a considerable number of names.

Mr. ROBINSON. It might have been Jack McMichael, who was chairman of the American Youth Congress, whom I knew, or William Pickens, with whom I was working at the time on the staff of the NAACP, or Dr. Guy Emery Shipler, or Norman Sibley, whom I knew very well at the University Heights Presbyterian Church, or John Paul Jones, or Dr. Harry F. Ward.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, another group which protested the hearings of the Rapp-Coudert committee was the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties, cited by the Attorney General in 1942, by this committee in 1942, and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee in 1957. This organization held a conference to protest the Rapp-Coudert committee at the Hotel Pennsylvania on July 27, 1942. This gathering was called a Conference to Protect our Free Public Schools from Coudertism and Defeatism. And the flyer or piece of literature distributed announcing this event, the call to the conference, actually bears the caption "For Victory Over Fascism In Our Schools." It contains the name of the Rev. James H. Robinson as sponsor of the conference. Do you recall sponsoring this conference?

Mr. ROBINSON. I believe I do recall sponsoring that conference.

Mr. McNAMARA. Again, do you recall who solicited your support for it?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall who it was, but when you look down these names you see a list of a good many other people whom I suppose were in the same position I was, and who had concerns for causes, but not concern for who was sponsoring the cause and what ultimate aims they might have.

Mr. McNAMARA. Could you tell us this, Doctor. At the time you were lending your support to those organizations, opposing the Rapp-Coudert hearings, were you doing so because you were opposed to the elimination of Communists from teaching positions, or from the educational system in New York City? Basically, the purpose of the Rapp-Coudert committee was to eliminate the Communists who had infiltrated the New York City school system. I was wondering if your support of these various groups was based on your belief that Communists should be permitted to teach and you were, therefore, opposed to the basic concept of this hearing, this investigation?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, I was not against it, if I can say this right, because they wanted to get Communists out of it. That would not have been my position. I was for keeping the Communists out in the open and not disbarring them, because I always thought it was better dealing with them in the open than having to deal with them behind. This was always my position, but I did not take this position, because I wanted to see Communists put out of the system. I did this, because I did not like some of the ways the committee was working but I was not then nor ever have been in favor of protecting Communists or promoting communism.

Mr. McNAMARA. The American Youth Congress was cited by this committee in 1939, by the Attorney General in 1942. This organization was active in the late 1930's and early 1940's. It originally was a

broad youth organization which was comprised of both Communists and non-Communist groups. Eventually, the Communists did succeed in taking it over completely. In July 1940, the American Youth Congress held its sixth annual meeting in Wisconsin. The theme of this meeting was a protest against American aid to England and France. This was the time of the Hitler-Stalin pact. The report of the conference, a copy of which I have here, identifies James Robinson as one of the organization's representatives-at-large. Do you recall holding that position with the American Youth Congress at the time?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, I never had any such position as that.

Mr. McNAMARA. Were you in any way affiliated with the American Youth Congress—a member, or an officer, or an official?

Mr. ROBINSON. I represented the youth department of the NAACP in relationship to that group in association with a number of organizations at the time who were associated with the overall American Youth Congress.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall whether or not you participated in that sixth annual meeting in Wisconsin?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, I did not.

Mr. McNAMARA. The *Daily Worker* of October 28, 1940, pages one and two, reported that a number of youth leaders throughout the country had issued a statement expressing concern about the legal right of minority parties, including the Communist Party, to a place on the ballot. It lists the Rev. James Robinson as a signer of this statement. I notice that the statement was issued by Jack McMichael who was then chairman of the American Youth Congress. You previously indicated that you were acquainted with Mr., now Rev. McMichael. Do you recall signing this statement?

Mr. ROBINSON. I recall signing that statement. Jack McMichael—I first knew him down at the King Mountain Field Conference of the Student Christian Movement at the North Carolina meeting, where the Presbyterian Church in the United States had its summer conference headquarters at Montreat. He was head of the Southern movement of the Student Christian Movement. Later on he became involved in this and went on to other things.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall whether you were shown the text of this statement before it was issued? I ask that because I see here, reading from this statement:

In the State of New York today, a campaign of terrorism and brutal intimidation is being conducted against individuals who have signed nominating petitions for the Communist Party.

As an old-time New Yorker, and actually living in the city as of that date, October 28, 1940, I do not recall any such activity. I was just wondering if you were aware of the fact, when you signed the statement, that it contained such an accusation and whether or not you might have had knowledge of such a campaign of terrorism?

Mr. ROBINSON. There certainly was no campaign of terrorism. I would not have signed that statement, if I had read the whole thing. My interest, mainly, as I indicated before, was keeping them out in the open, a position which developed even more fully later on.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, the American Student Union was cited as a Communist front by this committee in 1939. The *Daily*

*Worker* of October 9, 1940, reported that on the following day there would be peace demonstrations on 10 New York City campuses and that these meetings were timed to coincide with nationwide peace demonstrations sponsored on 110 other campuses by the American Student Union. These demonstrations were sponsored as part of its national student "Walk-Out on War." The *Daily Worker*, the issue which I have just mentioned, reported that Rev. James Robinson would speak at one of these rallies, the one held at Brooklyn College (evening school). Do you recall whether or not you actually did speak at that rally?

Mr. ROBINSON. I am sure I did not speak at that rally. I did speak at another rally on the campus of Columbia.

Mr. McNAMARA. On this date, the same date? Do you know if it was part of this "Walk-Out on War" demonstration?

Mr. ROBINSON. That was in the fall, wasn't it? No, I spoke at Columbia at a rally against war in the spring of that year.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall who requested you to make this speech?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall the individual at the time. I wish my memory served me a good deal more at this period in detail about people.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you, today, have any recollection or knowledge or suspicion, at that time, that the American Student Union might have been under Communist control or infiltrated by Communists and influenced by them?

Mr. ROBINSON. At the time I did not have that feeling.

Mr. McNAMARA. The *Daily Worker* of March 5, 1941, page two, published a statement protesting the United States Government's attitude toward the Communist Party and the fact that it had been ruled off the ballot in 15 States in recent elections. That issue of *The Worker* listed the Rev. James H. Robinson as one of the signers of this statement. Will you tell the committee whether or not you do recall signing it?

Mr. ROBINSON. I believe I did sign that statement.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall who solicited your signature, or any of the circumstances surrounding your signing?

Mr. ROBINSON. Well, this was a position that I had at the time and I was opposed to having it ruled illegal; not that I was for it, a position which I have developed in many other areas. I would like to state at the end of these documents, more fully, my position and I have used it in other connections later on. I do not recall who asked me to do this.

Mr. McNAMARA. To the best of your recollection, Doctor—I am not sure of the developments that took place in each one of these 15 States—do you recall any particulars and specifically on what grounds the party was ruled off the ballot, whether it was on the grounds that it did not meet the qualifications established by the various States for political parties, or what it might have been?

Mr. ROBINSON. The details? I honestly cannot say that I know about the States as to why it was ruled off the ballot.

Mr. McNAMARA. The Citizens' Committee To Free Earl Browder, was cited as Communist by the Attorney General of the United States in 1942 and this committee in 1944. That committee, of course, was

set up to try to win a pardon or the release of Earl Browder from the Atlanta Penitentiary where he was serving a prison sentence for fraudulent use of passports. He was, at that time, general secretary of the Communist Party. The *People's Voice*, issue of March 21, 1942, featured a full-page advertisement of the Citizens' Committee To Free Earl Browder. It lists the Rev. James H. Robinson as one of these who had signed a petition for Earl Browder's release.

Do you recall whether or not you did sign such a petition?

Mr. ROBINSON. I think I would have signed that on the basis that it was the feeling at that time, at least, this is what I was led to believe, that Browder could be used by the United States in the prosecution of the war effort.

Mr. McNAMARA. Could you tell where, when, or how, you gained that impression, or who gave you that impression?

Mr. ROBINSON. It could have come from any number of people in those days. It might have been from—members of this connection at the time, I hate to use names, because I do not know.

Mr. SCHADEBERG. It could have come from some literature. I am a clergyman so I know that it might have come across the desk either in a professional magazine, or even a church magazine.

Mr. ROBINSON. It could have come from that and even from a number of groups having the peace idea. Some of those people I knew and was in contact with for some time.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did it ever occur to you as being rather strange that some people you might have been acquainted with during the period of the Stalin-Hitler pact and who were violently pro-peace and against U.S. participation in the war—did it ever occur to you to be strange that, immediately after the break in the pact occasioned by Hitler's attack on Stalin, these people just switched to the opposite position. They became violently pro-war; they could not do enough to promote the war effort, and so forth.

Mr. ROBINSON. That began to dawn on me, I would say, 3 or 4 or 5 months after this switch came, when I began to think out a good many things for myself. Yes, I did begin to wonder about this.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, do you recall any other cases during World War II in which someone had been imprisoned for a conviction under a criminal statute and concerning whom you felt he could help the war effort if he were released—and therefore you might have signed a petition for his release?

Mr. ROBINSON. I can think of no one else, no.

Mr. McNAMARA. The National Federation for Constitutional Liberties was cited as Communist by the Attorney General in 1942, by this committee in 1942, by the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee in 1957. In January 1943, at the start of the 78th Congress, a message was submitted to the House of Representatives sponsored by the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties, urging that the Committee on Un-American Activities be abolished as a step toward U.S. victory in World War II. This petition, a facsimile of which I have in my hand, lists the Rev. James H. Robinson, Church of the Master, New York, New York, as one of the signers. Do you recall signing this petition?

Mr. ROBINSON. Mr. Dies was head of the committee then, wasn't he?

Mr. McNAMARA. That is right.

Mr. ROBINSON. I remember signing this. This is a damaging admission, but I have to admit it. I signed it.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall who approached you to sign this petition, or any of the circumstances surrounding the development?

Mr. ROBINSON. Well, I had had a great deal of discussion about Mr. Dies and the committee over the whole period of its formation and development with a good many people that I talked with. I think this one I did on my own without anybody influencing me or suggesting that I do it.

Mr. McNAMARA. In other words, you heard of this petition perhaps being circulated by the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties?

Mr. ROBINSON. They probably sent it to me knowing my feeling about a number of things.

Mr. McNAMARA. May I ask if, at the time, you had any suspicion or belief that the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties was a Communist-front organization?

Mr. ROBINSON. I honestly cannot answer that categorically. I would not want to say that I did or did not, when I am not sure.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, the *Daily Worker* of January 13, 1943, page three, mentions a meeting at which Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., New York County Chairman of the Communist Party, would review a recently published book written by Earl Browder, the leader of the United States Communist Party. This meeting was to be held on January 15, 1943, in New York City, and it reports that the Rev. James H. Robinson would serve as chairman of this meeting. Do you recall whether or not you did serve as chairman of that meeting?

Mr. ROBINSON. I did not serve as chairman of that meeting.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you have any recollection of having been asked to do so?

Mr. ROBINSON. I think at that time Ben Davis was a city councilman, was he not?

Mr. McNAMARA. That is right.

Mr. ROBINSON. And I had supported his candidacy because nobody else was nominating Negroes at that time. He probably could have asked me about this, but I did not and would not want to be associated in that way at the time, and I did not accept, if I were asked.

Mr. McNAMARA. You say then, that you do not recall it specifically, but if you had been asked it might have been by Davis—or do you recall definitely being asked and refusing?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall being asked and refusing. But that is not a meeting that I would have chaired.

Mr. McNAMARA. The National Negro Congress, Dr. Robinson, was cited as a Communist-front organization by the Attorney General in 1942, by this committee in 1939, and by the Subversive Activities Control Board in 1957.

The *Daily Worker* of March 15, 1943, page three, reported that the National Negro Congress had called a protest meeting which was to be held the following Thursday night at the Church of the Master, of which I believe you were then pastor. The purpose of the meeting was to demand the immediate release of George A. Burrows, who had been charged with attempted rape and whom Governor Dewey of New

York had extradited to Mississippi. Do you recall this meeting being held at the Church of the Master?

Mr. ROBINSON. I recall that incident. I think I recall that meeting being held at the Church of the Master.

Mr. McNAMARA. The *Daily Worker* of March 20, 1943, page three, reported that you spoke at the "Save George Burrows Rally" held at the Church of the Master. Do you recall whether or not you did speak at the rally?

Mr. ROBINSON. If they were there in my church and I was there, I spoke.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall the incidents surrounding the meeting, that is, who approached you and requested that the meeting be held in your church? I presume it would be someone from the National Negro Congress.

Mr. ROBINSON. I knew a lot of people in that Congress which was headed by John Davis at the time.

I forget his middle initial. John P. Davis, I think it was, who headed it up at that time. And I would have been asked by them, because I had taken a position already from stories in the newspapers, mainly, the *Amsterdam News*, I suppose. I do not know when *People's Voice* went out of business, but I stated I thought the Governor had made a mistake in extraditing this man and I made that perfectly clearly understood in my own position.

Mr. McNAMARA. Were you aware, or did you suspect at the time, that the National Negro Congress was Communist-controlled?

Mr. ROBINSON. In the beginning, I did not suspect that it was. I thought it was another bona fide organization going out to fight for the rights of Negroes and full citizenship. Later on, I would say about 1944 or 1945, I came to know a great deal more about the National Negro Congress and entered into active opposition with the NAACP to them.

Mr. McNAMARA. Are you acquainted with A. Philip Randolph?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes.

Mr. McNAMARA. Certain material appeared in the *Congressional Record* of September 24, 1942, concerning the National Negro Congress and A. Philip Randolph. I was just wondering if you were aware of this? It states that Mr. Randolph, president of the National Negro Congress since its inception in 1936, refused to run again in April 1940 "on the ground that it [the National Negro Congress] was deliberately packed with Communists and Congress of Industrial Organization members who were either Communists or sympathizers with Communists".

I was wondering if you were familiar with the fact that A. Philip Randolph had taken this action as early as 1940 after serving as president of the Congress for 4 years?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, I was not aware of that.

Mr. McNAMARA. The *Daily Worker* of March 17, 1943, page three, reported that the 11th Assembly District Club of the Communist Party called an "action mass meeting" for that day to protest "high prices, high rents, and Negro job discrimination." The *Daily Worker* also listed certain persons who were sponsors and endorsers of this meeting, including the Rev. James H. Robinson. Do you care to make any comment on this report? Do you remember that meeting?



Mr. ROBINSON. I do not remember the meeting, but I was active in the whole business of extremely high prices in the Harlem community and, among other things, started a co-op store and a credit union to combat it on my own through the church. I would have been involved in something like this, I think, knowing full well they were Communists at that point to get up and state a position that I thought I wanted to get across.

Mr. McNAMARA. Were you then a resident of the 11th Assembly District; do you recall?

Mr. ROBINSON. Where is it?

Mr. McNAMARA. The mass meeting was at All Souls Church at the corner of 114th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue. Among the speakers were Benjamin Davis, along with a number of other people. Do you recall ever having been approached by anyone whom you knew to be associated with the 11th Assembly District Club of the Communist Party to support any of its functions?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not think they would have sent anyone to me, as I look back on it, now, anybody from the Communist Party who I would suspect to be a Communist to ask me to do anything.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you happen to recall who any of the officers of that 11th Assembly District Club might have been at that time?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not.

Mr. McNAMARA. I have here, Dr. Robinson, a flyer distributed by the 9th Assembly District Club of the Communist Party advertising "Forums for Victory" and this flyer specifically mentions a symposium held on Thursday, April 22, 1943. It says here Rev. James H. Robinson, Church of the Master, and two others—Minna Harkavy, famous sculptress, and Isadore Begun, War Activities Director, New York State Committee, Communist Party—would speak at the symposium. This was held at the Hotel Newton, Broadway and 94th Street, at 8:30 p.m.

Do you recall this affair and whether or not you did, as advertised in this item, speak at it?

Mr. ROBINSON. To the best of my memory, I did not.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall ever being approached by the 9th Assembly District Club of the Communist Party to speak at any of its Forums for Victory?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall it. I have no doubt they would have asked me.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, do you have a copy of the excerpt from the hearing of this committee on May 3, 1955?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes, I have.

Mr. McNAMARA. This is a hearing at which Mildred Blauvelt, a New York City police undercover agent in the party, testified. Blauvelt Exhibit No. 1 is a notice she had received about this series of four Forums for Victory, which also listed you, Rev. James Robinson, as one of the speakers on April 22. You have had a chance to review this exhibit, but to the best of your knowledge—if I recall your testimony correctly—you do not remember that you were actually billed as a speaker or actually spoke on that occasion?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall, but let me answer it this way: Who is Isadore Begun? The name is unfamiliar to me. And if I spoke, and I may have spoken, it would have been because I was working strongly

then with a great many Jewish groups against anti-semitism. I would have spoken only for that reason and under those circumstances.

Mr. McNAMARA. You mean that you may, then, actually have spoken at that affair?

Mr. ROBINSON. On the 22nd, yes, of April.

Mr. McNAMARA. And at that period then, I gather, you believed that cooperation with the Communist Party, to the extent of appearing at its affairs, was, shall we say, a proper thing?

Mr. ROBINSON. What was the date again, of this, 1943?

Mr. McNAMARA. This is April 22, 1943.

Mr. ROBINSON. I would say that at that time I believed if I could utilize the Communist Party for things that I believed in, although I knew it was a hazardous pursuit to try to do so, that I should try to do that.

Mr. McNAMARA. Have you since found out that the Communists have used anti-semitism, or the elimination of anti-semitism and the elimination of prejudice or discrimination of all kinds, including discrimination against Negroes, more as a tool to aid their own purposes, than as a sincere position they are taking?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes, I found out a lot of things about the methods of the Communist Party in utilizing these things, and I have written extensively about them, especially a chapter on communism in a book called *Tomorrow Is Today* which was published in 1954.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, in 1943, Benjamin J. Davis was the Communist Party candidate for the New York City Council. The *Daily Worker* of October 5, 1943, page four, recorded that the Rev. James H. Robinson was chairman of the Ministers Committee to Elect Benjamin J. Davis. Would you care to make any comment or explanation about this item? To the best of your recollection, were you chairman of the Ministers Committee to Elect Benjamin J. Davis?

Mr. ROBINSON. I was.

Mr. McNAMARA. Could you tell me on whose suggestion or initiative you assumed that position?

Mr. ROBINSON. Probably Ben Davis asked me himself.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did you participate in, shall we say, a founding meeting of this committee? Do you know how it was organized?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, I do not know how it was organized. Possibly after it was organized, I, with a group of other ministers, agreed, after I was approached, to be chairman of the committee to try to get a Negro elected to the City Council. I do not recall at the time whether Mr. Powell was running at that point or not. I think not, in 1943, and I wanted to see some Negro become involved in the government of the city of New York and neither the Democratic nor the Republican Party would nominate anybody. And so I supported him.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall whether or not an organization meeting of this group was called and whether or not at that meeting you were elected chairman—or were you just named by Ben Davis?

Mr. ROBINSON. Actually, I was asked to be chairman. I was not elected chairman, and I was probably asked by Davis if I would be the chairman of this committee, as in former years I was asked by a number of people if I would be chairman of several committees for office in New York, like Earl Brown when he ran for City Council and some others, some of whom I acceded to and some I did not.

Mr. McNAMARA. I gather, Doctor, from some of the statements you have made in this testimony that were Ben Davis to run today you would not accept if you were asked to be chairman of his committee, is that correct?

Mr. ROBINSON. I would be chairman of the committee on the other side, if I had the chance.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would you state approximately when your position on this matter changed?

Mr. ROBINSON. I think my position on these matters began to change in the middle 1940's toward the end of the war and were solidified, I would say, by 1949-1950, when I took a whole new position which I referred to previously. After I took that trip abroad for the Presbyterian Church in 1951 and 1952 to see who was winning the minds of young people and learned a good many more things outside of this country that I had not learned while I was in it—although I had learned a good many things about communism in this country—I think my change was completed.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, I believe you stated you were acquainted with Ferdinand C. Smith, is that correct?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall a testimonial dinner in honor of Ferdinand C. Smith held in New York City at the Hotel Commodore on September 20, 1944, which, according to the program, you sponsored?

Mr. ROBINSON. I remember that.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you have any knowledge of who organized this dinner in honor of Ferdinand C. Smith?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall at the moment.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall, by any chance, who approached you and asked you to support the dinner?

Mr. ROBINSON. That, I do not recall. It could have been Ferdinand Smith himself, on the basis that I knew him, I worked with him in 1938, 1939, 1940, and 1941, as I indicated on a number of community projects, welfare and social committees in the Harlem community.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall whether or not you attended the dinner?

Mr. ROBINSON. I am pretty sure I did not attend the dinner.

Mr. McNAMARA. I believe you testified earlier that you were not surprised when Smith was removed from his post in the National Maritime Union for Communist activities and was subsequently deported—or am I thinking of someone else?

Mr. ROBINSON. He was asked to leave the country and went to the West Indies. I made that statement a moment ago.

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, in 1943, the Communist Party abandoned its Young Communist League and formed in its stead an organization called the American Youth for Democracy. This organization absorbed both the Young Communist League members and also, to a great extent, the American Youth Congress people. On October 16, 1944, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the American Youth for Democracy a "Salute to Young America" dinner was held. The American Youth for Democracy, by the way, was cited by this committee in 1944, the Attorney General in 1947, and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee in 1956. The program for this dinner,

which I have mentioned, lists the Rev. James H. Robinson as one of the sponsors of it.

Do you recall sponsoring that dinner? It was held at the Hotel Commodore on October 16, 1944?

Mr. ROBINSON. I am not very familiar with that in my recollection. I likely could have been one of the sponsors of it.

Mr. McNAMARA. But you have no clear or concise recollection, is that correct?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, as to whether I participated in the meeting and the dinner or not.

Mr. McNAMARA. Can you tell us whether or not you were aware of the American Youth for Democracy's existence at the time and the role it was playing as the successor to the Young Communist League?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not think I would have been aware of that.

Mr. McNAMARA. The following year, on December 12, 1945, on the occasion of the second anniversary of the American Youth for Democracy a dinner entitled "Welcome Home, Joe" was held by the organization. According to the printed program, Rev. James Robinson was a sponsor of this dinner. Do you recall that? It was held at the Hotel Roosevelt in New York City.

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not think I was a sponsor of that dinner. We looked at that. By this time I had begun to be aware of it. Looking at that document, I would have to say that I might have let my name be used, I think.

Mr. McNAMARA. Did you, by any chance, know the Reverend William Howard Melish who was listed as one of the co-chairmen of the dinner?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes, I knew him.

Mr. McNAMARA. And you have indicated you knew Rev. Jack R. McMichael, another co-chairman?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall whether or not they might have approached you, or do you think it is a possibility, if you have no recollection of this dinner, that they might have used your name without your permission?

Could you state an opinion on that matter?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not know if they used my name without permission, but if I was asked at all it would have been more likely by Jack McMichael. I did not have that kind of relationship with William Howard Melish. I saw him at a number of meetings, religious affairs, and Protestant council meetings, but that is all.

Mr. ICHORD. Mr. McNamara, before you go on to another exhibit, it is now 12:17 and the chairman has a meeting at 12:30. I would suggest a recess now and resume at 2:00 o'clock.

The Chair will declare the meeting in recess until 2:00 o'clock.

(Whereupon, at 12:17 p.m. Tuesday, May 15, 1964, the subcommittee recessed to reconvene at 2:00 p.m., the same day.)

#### AFTERNOON SESSION, TUESDAY, MAY 15, 1964

(The subcommittee reconvened at 2:00 p.m., Hon. William M. Tuck, chairman of the subcommittee, presiding).

Mr. TUCK. The subcommittee will come to order. Proceed.

## TESTIMONY OF REV. DR. JAMES H. ROBINSON—Resumed

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, the *Daily Worker* of August 14, 1949, named the Rev. James H. Robinson as a signer of a Communist Party nominating petition for Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., who was then running for the office of City Councilman for the City of New York on the Communist Party ticket.

Could you tell me whether or not this *Daily Worker* report is accurate?

Mr. ROBINSON. I believe that is accurate.

Mr. McNAMARA. I have here a copy of the petition in question and I was wondering if you would be good enough to look at it and tell us whether or not that is your signature.

Mr. ROBINSON. I did and that is my signature.

I looked at it this morning with Mr. Appell, before we came in, and identified that as my signature.

Mr. McNAMARA. Would you care to make any comment on your signing of this petition?

Mr. ROBINSON. I can say that I had the same position that I had before. I almost would like to be able to talk off the record on this point, although I know I cannot ask it. But at that point there was another man coming up to run for Congress in that district—run for City Council I mean—who also wanted to run at the same time and who I was opposed to. I thought the least difficult of the choices for all of us concerned would be Ben Davis, even though he was known to be a Communist.

Mr. McNAMARA. I was just trying to recall. This was August 1949. It is my recollection that the top leaders of the Communist Party had been indicted under the Smith Act for conspiring to teach and advocate the overthrow of the United States Government. This was in 1948, I believe, and the trial started in 1949. So I believe Mr. Davis was under indictment at that time. Do you recall whether that was so?

Mr. ROBINSON. I think he was.

Mr. McNAMARA. And you still felt that he rated your support and vote in the election, I gather?

Mr. ROBINSON. I think he did. I think under wiser judgment now I would have said, "I will not stand to help either one of them."

Mr. McNAMARA. Dr. Robinson, in the summer of 1949, the Communist Party staged another one of a series of concerts held in Peekskill, New York, the purpose being to raise funds for the Civil Rights Congress which has been cited as the Communist Party's legal defense agency.

The 1949 concert featured Paul Robeson and, in the course of the concert, there was rioting, violence. Large numbers of State Troopers and police were called in to quell it. There was a grand jury investigation and so forth. Now, the *Daily Worker* of October 14, 1949, on page two, stated that Paul Robeson, who was then chairman of the Council on African Affairs, had, in the name of his organization, sent a letter to President Truman demanding that the Peekskill riots be made the subject of Federal investigation and prosecution. The *Daily Worker* of that date also reported that Rev. James H. Robinson was one of the signers of that letter.

Do you recall giving your assent or signature for this letter? The Council, by the way, was cited by the Attorney General in 1947 and by the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee in 1956.

Mr. ROBINSON. I recall that.

Mr. McNAMARA. Could you make any observations on the action?

Mr. ROBINSON. Well, I was concerned about what I thought was some injustice and the way that situation was handled in Peekskill and I was expressing my opinion, then, even though through this medium, about my opposition to it and trying to help find the means to getting something done positively about the Peekskill situation.

Mr. McNAMARA. Could you tell us what you felt was wrong, or what the injustice was, in this situation?

Mr. ROBINSON. I think there were a lot of people, as I can recall that situation at that time, about which there was a good deal of discussion in our neighborhood and our community about the unfortunate events that took place there, that there was a good deal of injustice done to many of the people in that area who had some legitimate grievance. To be sure, the Communist Party used some of this to their own ends, but there were a good many people that I thought deserved our support.

Mr. McNAMARA. Were these the people in Peekskill? I am wondering who were the people injured or subjected to injustice in some form—whether you can recall specifically who they were.

Mr. ROBINSON. I cannot remember whether they came to the concert or were the people from the community. My impression was that many of the people were from the community, and some of the people who came were unjustly treated.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall if, at the time you signed this letter, you were aware that there was a grand jury investigation underway to determine the cause and responsibility for the riot?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not recall that.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall the results of that grand jury investigation?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not.

Mr. McNAMARA. Actually, the conclusion was that these riots were Communist-inspired and instigated. I might also point out for the record, I believe, that the magazine *Commentary*, which is a publication of the American Jewish Committee, featured a very lengthy article on the riot, a scholarly work, which drew the same conclusion.

Doctor, who, if you recall, solicited your signature for this letter. Do you remember that?

Mr. ROBINSON. No, I do not remember who did.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall who it might have been who gave you these accounts of the injustice and so forth done to the Peekskill people in the Peekskill area, or to some of those who went up to the concert from New York City?

Mr. ROBINSON. Well, my information on that would have come, generally, from our own *Amsterdam News*, maybe the *People's Voice*, at that time, and from a good deal of discussion I had with a number of people. There was a pretty general support in the whole of the Harlem community on this.

Mr. McNAMARA. My next question, Doctor, concerns an organization which has not been officially cited as Communist. However I

would point out that the sponsors of the organization who have been identified as Communist Party members include Hugh Bryson, Shirley Graham, Albert E. Kahn, John Howard Lawson, George Murphy, Paul Robeson, and Ferdinand E. Smith. Moreover, Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, the chairman of this group, the African Aid Committee, openly joined the Communist Party in 1961 and for many years prior thereto was extremely active in Communist causes—so much so that in 1948 or 1949, as I recall, he lost his position as research director for the NAACP.

But this African Aid Committee was formed in May of 1949, according to its literature, and I have here a number of letterheads and so on, which list the Reverend James H. Robinson of New York City as a sponsor of the committee.

Do you recollect your sponsorship and, if so, do you recall who it was who requested it?

Mr. ROBINSON. What is the name of the organization again?

Mr. McNAMARA. It is the African Aid Committee, located at 23 W. 26th Street, which, as I recall, was the home of Frederick Vanderbilt Field and was used as the headquarters of quite a few fronts.

Mr. ROBINSON. I remember signing that. That was in relationship to doing something for laborers and people, for the freedom movement, I believe, in Nigeria, certainly in Africa.

Mr. McNAMARA. When you agreed to serve as a sponsor of the organization, were you aware of the number of persons identified as Communist Party members, under oath, who were associated with it?

Mr. ROBINSON. Some of them I knew. I did not know that Shirley Graham was at that time, for example, with whom I had a close association, because she also worked for a while in the NAACP.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, some years back, in the late 1940's, a dispute arose in Brooklyn, New York, involving the Church of the Holy Trinity. It centered around the Rev. John Howard Melish and his son, the Rev. William Howard Melish, and was based on the Communist-front activities of the Rev. William Howard Melish, the son, his leadership of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, and public statements by Louis Budenz that he knew him as a Communist. A prolonged dispute followed. The vestry voted to oust the Rev. John Howard Melish as pastor, because he continued to support his son's activities.

And then his son was voted pastor in his place. Bishop DeWolfe then appointed a substitute pastor and Rev. William Howard Melish refused to vacate the church. A very difficult situation was created and eventually it ended up in the courts, the Supreme Court of the United States.

On January 11, 1951, a motion was filed on behalf of 2,576 clergymen petitioning the Supreme Court for leave to file *amici curiae*, a brief, in the case. Your name was listed among the clergymen on whose behalf this motion was presented. Do you recall that event, Doctor?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall who solicited your support for this brief?

Mr. ROBINSON. It must have been some of those clergymen who signed it. My position at the time was that this was badly handled,

although it is certainly not my business to decide how Anglicans handle their problems internally, by the Anglicans, nor is it their problem how we solve our problems in the Presbyterian Church, internally.

I felt that was an injustice. I realize now that was not a very good position to take.

Mr. McNAMARA. Eventually, as this dispute ended up, the Supreme Court left standing a lower court decision upholding the bishop and, after 12 years of padlocking and court battles and so forth, the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Long Island—because of Rev. Melish's defiance—finally had to just close down the church and declare the parish extinct.

Doctor, what was your reaction at the time to Rev. Melish's activities, his leadership in the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, and other Communist-front activities, and also the public identification of him as a Communist?

Did you feel that despite this, he should be supported?

Mr. ROBINSON. That is a hard question to answer. I don't think, in the sense that I was not aware at the time that he had been identified and established as a Communist, that I would not have supported his religious right, but in light of more knowledge I would say I would take a wholly different position today.

Mr. McNAMARA. On January 14, 1953, the *Daily Worker* reported that 1,500 leading Protestant clergymen had joined in sending a letter to President Truman asking him to save the lives of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, who had been convicted of espionage against the United States on behalf of the Soviet Union, and who were sentenced to death and actually executed on June 19, 1953.

The *Daily Worker* of that date listed Rev. James H. Robinson as one of the signers of this letter.

Mr. ROBINSON. I signed the letter. I remember that I signed that. My only purpose was that while it was right to convict them, I thought the same purpose could be, in accordance with my position against killing people because of crimes, achieved by keeping them in jail for life. Of course, I thought they were not innocent and I thought they committed a heinous or greatly offensive crime.

Mr. McNAMARA. Do you recall, Dr. Robinson, who approached you to sign this letter?

Mr. ROBINSON. Do you have a list there?

Mr. McNAMARA. This lists a number of people, not very many, who did sign the letter.

Mr. ROBINSON. I know most of these people here who were distinguished clergymen, like Robert H. Nicholas, professor emeritus of Union Seminary, and Paul Scherer of Holy Trinity Lutheran, who was also there at the time and many others with whom I was intimately acquainted.

I could not say which of these people I discussed it with. I am sure that I talked with all of them at one time or another.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, the *Daily Worker* of January 13, 1953, page 8, reported that the National Committee To Defend Negro Leadership, at a ceremony held the previous Sunday, had made its first annual citations of Negro men and women who had "fought for democracy and peace in the face of attack," and the article stated that among those honored was Dr. James A. Robinson, identified as a churchman



whose passport was recently demanded by the State Department. Was this Dr. James A. Robinson you, was that an incorrect middle initial, or what happened?

Mr. ROBINSON. The middle initial is incorrect. When it refers to one who the State Department asked for his passport, that refers to me which I should like to say, after 3 months, I got to keep. But I did not receive a citation. They have never given me a citation. I do not have it.

Mr. McNAMARA. This article does not name you as one of the persons who showed up to receive the award or to accept the scroll. And while the National Committee To Defend Negro Leadership has not been cited as Communist by any Federal agency, we bring this up only because among those honored by the group on the occasion were known and identified Communist Party leaders such as Ben Davis, Pettis Perry, Henry Winston, Benjamin Carruthers, and Coleman Young, Paul Robeson, and Dr. W. E. B. DuBois. And one of the speakers was Dr. Herbert Aptheker, generally recognized, I believe, as one of the leading theoreticians of the Communist Party in this country, and the editor of *Political Affairs*.

Do you recall receiving any communication from the group informing you that the award had been voted to you?

Mr. ROBINSON. I know something, or I recall knowing something about this, but deciding in my own mind that I did not want the award, what I did about it—whether I wrote them or told somebody at the time that this is not the kind of an award I could accept in that company, I do not know. I know I did not go to any meetings where an award was given. At that point I would not have wanted to go. At that time, I knew where Aptheker, Davis, and Winston stood.

Mr. McNAMARA. The organization I am about to mention now, Doctor, has not been officially cited as Communist. The committee does not take the position that it is, and I am bringing it up now only because of our understanding that you would like to make a statement on all of your activities that might be controversial or might involve institutions or organizations accused as leftist and so forth. I have in mind the Highlander Center in Knoxville, Tennessee. The letter of the Center, which is a successor to the Highlander Folk School of Montecagle, Tennessee, is dated December 12, 1962, and lists you as a sponsor of the Center.

Would you tell us what your understanding is of the nature of the Center?

Mr. ROBINSON. First of all, I helped them in a good many ways in the raising of funds for the Highlander Folk School, and I think there was a chap there by the name of Myles Horton, the director of it. My understanding was that the name was changed when either the local community or the State of Tennessee tried to keep them from going on with their work, and this new organization came about as an effort to keep it alive.

This was during the time and shortly before the first of Martin Luther King's boycotts in Alabama where a number of people even before and afterwards came to get some courses in adult education and in political activities in terms of how to better the conditions of Negroes.

Mr. McNAMARA. Apparently the Folk School which preceded it became controversial and subject to a certain amount of criticism because, although those who run the Center have never been identified as members of the Communist Party, some pretty well-known Communists—including some top ranking officials of the party—have gone down to the school, taken part in some of its functions, attended some of its classes, and so forth.

And I think you can understand why this would make the school controversial—the support these people have given to it and the fact that this support has not appeared to have been rejected.

I have one item here from the *New York Times* of September 14, 1958, page 16, which I would like to bring to your attention. The article reports an interview held with you following your tour of African countries in 1958. The caption of the article reads as follows:

“Reds, Not Nasser, Feared in Africa,” and this article makes it quite clear that you stated in this interview that communism was the greater threat to the newly independent and emerging nations of Africa. Would you care to elucidate on some of the comments you made at the time, following your African trip?

Mr. ROBINSON. I made a whole lot of comments at the time. Some of them were highly critical of the State Department’s personnel in Africa, which I felt was not very good, not very wise. We had no policy. I made many speeches on that.

We were developing no personnel and we needed to have a wholly new massive arrangement on how we were going to help these African countries meet their opportunity, how skillfully we were going to stand against communism in this area, and how intelligently we were going to do it.

I wrote considerably about that and that became the basis, of course, of the development, Operation Crossroads Africa. Although we do not state this explicitly, our job is to fight communism; our job is to help people create that kind of a democratic structure that would help them to combat it.

Mr. McNAMARA. “Communist infiltration was seen by Rev. Robinson as the greater potential threat.” It says that is a greater threat than the activities of President Nasser. Do you think that the experience you had with Communists in the United States and their deceptive operations as evidenced by the record here, probably helped you in spotting what was going on in Africa? That is, as far as the activities directed by Moscow were concerned?

Mr. ROBINSON. I think the experiences I had here gave me a lot of insight into methods, techniques and strategy which stood me, first, in good stead when I was asked to go out to Asia on this project, and then, secondly, when I got involved in the whole Africa situation.

I have written extensively about it in chapter three of that little book, *Tomorrow Is Today*. I stated that we lost a great opportunity to know a lot about communism in the United States and how it worked, because we Americans were so ignorant about how Negroes as a whole rejected communism, beginning in 1932 when the first efforts of Communists were made to win them and get their allegiance, and in 1932 when they took something like 24 to Moscow to do a film.

All of them rejected communism and came back on their own money. We could have learned a great deal if we had paid more attention to their efforts.

Mr. McNAMARA. On the basis of your experience, what recommendations would you make today along those very lines? What can we learn? What basic principles do you think we can operate on in combating Communist attempts to win Negroes to their position on various matters, or to recruit them into the Communist movement?

Mr. ROBINSON. Can I broaden it a little bit?

Mr. McNAMARA. Surely.

Mr. ROBINSON. My position is this: First of all, I think that every student youth conference, whether it is YMCA, or one of the church groups, ought to involve in their summer study programs two things: First, it ought to have some nonpolitical people to come and talk about the responsibility of citizens in a democratic society. This is a wonderful opportunity.

There will be over 100,000 potential youth leaders in the United States all across the country, Westminster Foundations, Newman Clubs and a multitude of groups in summer conferences. They will have a lot of fun, songs—folk songs, dances, and a lot of religion, but they will have nothing about labor, nothing about politics and government, nothing about the world we live in, and what are the forces struggling for the minds of people.

I think in every conference there ought to be somebody who is an expert, who knows communism and its strategy, to work at the undergraduate level in these conferences. There is a wonderful opportunity to make them aware of the problem, to educate them on how best to meet it and overcome it.

Now in our preparations for the people who go with us on Crossroads, one of the essential things they must do is they have to read *Das Kapital*. We send them some other literature on Communist strategy and techniques. They are going to face some of these people and they are going to have to face them not in heat and anger, but with intelligence.

They are going to be better prepared to deal with these, if they have done their homework.

Secondly, I think every time there is a Communist youth conference we ought to find a way of preparing, training, and sending some people. This is a statement I made that got me in trouble when we took away the passports of the 41 American youths who went to Moscow and Peking some years back.

I wasn't against taking the passports. What I was against and what disturbed me was this was the end of it. Every 2 years there is going to be such a conference. It seems to me that we ought to prepare 100 people and find ways of getting them in to work for us from within.

It seems to me that we ought to prepare people and send them to work from the inside. I came to this conclusion, because when I first went on that trip abroad for the Presbyterians, I was asked by James Flint of the American Occupation Office (Religion Section) in Berlin, to go into Eastern Germany in August of 1951, trading on the fact

that I had been mistaken by a lot of young people as Paul Robeson, my name Robinson sounded similar. If they had asked me to sing, they would have known I was not.

I went up to the Polish border 4 days. I found thousands of young people who were not any more Communist than I was. And I said to myself, "What a tragedy."

I said, "We do not have people here among these thousand of young people who give our point of view from within," and the reason I came to that conclusion was that I had a meeting along with a young fellow who carried a Communist Party card, a German from East Germany, from the Student Christian Movement.

His name I never used, for a time, because it would have been bad to isolate him and to have identified him to the "Volks police." We met with 400 young people in the basement of St. Marion's Church until four o'clock in the morning. Two days later, 25 young people who were in that group came over to Jim Flint into West Germany, defected and decided to leave. Some of them had gotten to the conference there because somebody had paid their way.

It was the first time they had a chance to go somewhere. It seemed to me if you prepared and trained a corps of young people skillfully and put them in a place where they could do some good on the other side, since they are going to have that conference, and since some young Americans, misguided or not, are going to go, it is our duty to make all the capital we can.

Now in terms of the present struggle, as far as civil rights are concerned, I have just finished a chapter for a new book, which is going to be published by the United Church of Christ in the fall, called *For a Time of Promise and Anxiety*, on this whole situation, in which I point out that there are good reasons, sometimes, why people can logically be civilly disobedient.

But it is the obligation of the person who takes this stand to purge out of their ranks the kind of people who do not take it for the same good reasons of conscience and who try to use it to another advantage or infiltrate the movement for Communist ends.

This is their responsibility to do this. They cannot hide under the fact that our cause is so good and our situation is so desperate that we will accept anybody on a brotherhood front movement to come in and help us.

That will include Malcolm X, the Communists, and a good many other people with whom I would not agree under these circumstances. So I think the best thing to do is to prepare the minds of young people about what communism is and help them to face it.

If it had not been for the experience I had had when I went out to Asia and the Middle East in 1951 and in 1952 on the Presbyterian program, I would have not been, I could not have been effective at all, because I could not have understood in Northern Italy, or in Eastern Berlin, or among the Communists whom I have met in a great many places in Asia and especially in India, I could not have understood a great many things about Communist theory, strategy and methods and have been effective.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, I have here some excerpts from your book, *Tomorrow Is Today*, and you have, as you have indicated, a little

section on the subject of communism in this book. I could not help noticing this sentence:

To understand the enemy you must study his ideas, methods, and techniques. You have to know where he is and what his intentions are in order to anticipate his next move and finally defeat him.

This struck me for the simple reason that I happen to know that this is a major theme in speeches the chairman of this committee has been making lately. He has been stressing over and over the idea that the beginning of the answer to this problem is the study of communism, that we have to know it thoroughly.

And I gather from this, and from other sections of this book, that you feel there is a great need for this.

Mr. ROBINSON. I think there is a great need.

Mr. MCNAMARA. And you would therefore support, for example, the courses on communism that have been introduced in various school systems of late?

Mr. ROBINSON. Yes, especially depending on who is giving them.

Mr. MCNAMARA. I agree with you on that. You speak here, too, of the confusion that exists in America about the nature of communism. I would just like to quote your book and then ask you for your ideas as to the best way to end this confusion. Maybe you have other ideas—in addition to the concept of basic education on the subject. You wrote:

Our confusion was clearly shown the night Stalin died. Newspapers and radio commentators went through mental and emotional gymnastics which excited our imaginations with wild ideas of how Communist strategy might change—as though a change of strategy implied basic changes in communistic ideology.

If the Soviet leaders could have listened in they would have been gratified to know how uninformed some of us really were. The truth is that Communist strategy is directed by members of the Politburo and based on a set of inflexible dogmas that do not depend upon the Politburo leaders either for their being or for their survival.

If every member of the Politburo should die tomorrow, the strategy might shift, change, and jockey for a new position, but the essential aims of the attempt to remake both man and the world would remain constant.

Apparently this is the basic idea that you felt should be driven home. Do you have any suggestions to make in addition to that?

Mr. ROBINSON. I wish we could do some simple things, help people to get an understanding and an awareness. We talk with a good deal of heat and light about communism. A good many people hate it, but they do not know what it is or how it works, and what its ultimate aims and hopes are.

I think if there could be some simple things in which you could do this—I do not have the document any more, but when I was in India I did some things for Chester Bowles which I sent back through the consul pouch from Hong Kong, because I could not work on them until I got there, in which I pointed out in two areas what could be done to help people relate the United States to the problem of race which was a big problem and, secondly, how American personnel going out to Asia or to Africa ought to be briefed and prepared in terms of what Communist strategy is.

I thought some simple documents that could be put in the hands of everyone going out—I did one of these. I did a little book, as a result of that, and Donald Stone, now at the University of Pittsburgh, who

used to be head of the Mutual Security Agency, asked me to do, which was called, *Love of This Land*. This book pointed out what progress there had been in race relations, for use of American personnel in Government going out to Asia where there was a burning question, so they could give some constructive, positive answers.

Because I did not find many people in 1951 or 1952 who could do more than be angry or sensitive, my great strength was I could take these questions from thousands of Indian young people who raised questions, and I could put them in a constructive background by knowing some of the things that we had done, not saying that we were not guilty, that we were perfect, because that is the wrong thing to do.

You have to make people believe you are honest, first. Then you can get them beyond being just negative on things they know about the United States.

But I felt that everybody going abroad ought to be knowledgeable about communism, how it works, what the strategies are. For example, in India we had some people go out on leadership grants for the United States who fell right into all the traps of the Communists, which you always face any time you talk to a group of students or laborers, because a small group of Communists would be in the meeting and they would get the floor before anybody else got it, and pretty soon you would be pushed into a corner or on the defensive.

That is, if you did not know what was happening. It took me some time and many defeats, to know what was happening. You had to know how to answer them from the dialect of Marx ideology rather than getting angry or excited about it, and then move that meeting on to some other people there who wanted to get the floor. But you could not offend them, because, after all, they belonged to the country even though they might be Communists. An error of tactic here could lose you the whole audience. You have to know how to keep an audience and how to bring it to your point of view.

In Tokyo, Japan, at the university, two Communists got on both sides, one on one side of the room and one on the other side of the room. By that time I could pretty well tell the Communists by the areas of the room from which the applause came. I knew who was who and what their methods and techniques were, but nobody had helped prepare me for this, and most of the American people in Government, mission work and business I saw out in Asia at the time had not been prepared for this.

Sometimes an educated and important man like Saunders Redding, at the time, of the Hampton College faculty, whom State had sent out—came back from India saying, "All the Indian students are Communists." You would have to separate who is a Communist and who acts like a Communist, because it is nice to make someone from the United States feel like the rear end of a mule going north. These students toyed with him. The main fact is he gave up trying to fight the real Communist by oversimplification.

We give great attention to this whole area in Crossroads when our people meet at Douglas College for Women at Rutgers for 7 days for their final preparation. We indicate what types of groups in the various countries of Africa might be leftwing or Communist and how they can answer them effectively and how they are going to avoid being pushed into a corner.

And we do the same thing on race relations for our groups going out. Of course, they start a long time before this. We give them material to read as soon as our screening committee has selected them, and we try to get our selection done by the end of February, or before. Thus, they have 4 to 5 months of reading and other preparation.

That is, so we can put them on a reading course. Then, we have a number of conferences. We have one at each of 12 colleges and universities, spaced around the Nation, to each of which delegates from 20 to 30 colleges come.

We spend the whole day with the kind of problems they were going to face, what they should be reading, set up some potential situations that they might face, and help them to work out some of the answers, because they are going to be challenged all along the line, and especially by the leftwing students or the Communists.

This is going to be more of a problem in the years to come, because the great wave of African students who have gone to [East] Germany or Moscow or Peking or Poland is just now this summer beginning to come back in any significant numbers. In 4 to 5 years that wave will reach its peak.

So we are trying to prepare our young people and our leaders, too, in what they can do to win an audience and get people to go along with them and see their view rather than just winning a battle.

Mr. McNAMARA. Doctor, are you aware of the Freedom Academy bills which are presently pending before this committee, and on which we have held a number of days of hearings and are planning some additional hearings?

Mr. ROBINSON. I am not familiar with the bill.

Mr. McNAMARA. Basically, the Freedom Academy would be the kind of institution you have in mind, I believe, when you say that our Government personnel who serve overseas, no matter what agency they are connected with, and private individuals who are going overseas in the interest of the United States, to fight totalitarianism of one kind or another, are in unfortunate positions in that they do not know the strategy, tactics, tricks, and so forth of the enemy.

The Freedom Academy would be set up to teach them these things. It will be open to Government officials, private citizens, and also to foreign nationals.

Mr. ROBINSON. I would be wholeheartedly in favor of something like that.

Mr. McNAMARA. Earlier in your testimony, Doctor, you did mention Dr. Harry F. Ward as having been, I believe, one of your teachers when you were at Union Theological Seminary, and as a man who did approach you back in the late 1930's and ask you to support certain organizations, which it later developed were Communist-controlled.

There has been quite a bit said and even written about Dr. Ward and his influence on his students. I was wondering if you could assess approximately to what extent he might have influenced you to take part in some of the activities that you did after completing your studies?

Mr. ROBINSON. I have written a little bit about this in another book called, *Road Without Turning*, which I certainly hope I can get 6 months off to do the second half of, someday. It is my life up to 1948.

I would like to do it from 1948 to now, which has been the most productive part.

In this, I detailed some of the problems I had and hostilities I had growing up as a boy in Tennessee and in Youngstown and in the impoverished section of Cleveland, feeling a lack of acceptance on the part of white people generally, with the exception of a woman by the name of F. Lorraine Miller in Tonowanda, N.Y., whom I did not see until 5 years after I had graduated, but who made my education possible, which I wanted desperately to get.

My father took me out of school seven times, because, he said, "You are a Negro. You cannot go anywhere." I had to sneak and go to high school and to sneak and go to the first year of college in Cleveland, Ohio, where I went to the day school.

Harry Ward, after Lincoln University, where I finally got with the help of F. Lorraine Miller, when I got to Union Seminary, was the person who accepted me easier and quicker than anyone else.

There were some professors who said that Negroes were incapable, but we ought to let them in the school because they are going to go into the ministry. I remember one professor who gave every Negro a "B" whether he earned it or not, because he thought it was charitable.

I did not like that. I wanted to get what I earned. I would say that Reinhold Niebuhr agreed with me also, only his ideas were so ethnological I did not know what he was talking about. Harry Ward was simple, down to earth, and he accepted me.

He was then involved in the League Against War and Fascism. I remember the first time he asked me to come to a rally in Madison Square Garden. I was concerned with peace and a better deal for all people. He had a powerful impact on me and a large number of other students.

You have to realize that at that period Union Seminary was going through its own revolution in terms of the whole idea of the social involvement of the minister. There was a real revolt on the part of students against many of the people on the faculty, led by Harry F. Ward.

I would say that he had a powerful impact upon my life for about the next 7 or 8 years after that.

Mr. TUCK. Any other questions?

Mr. McNAMARA. I have no further questions.

Mr. TUCK. Do you have any other explanation, statements, or information you wish to give the committee?

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not have any more information on this whole business of Communist activity. The only statement I would like to make, if I may, is to say, first of all, I appreciate this committee's giving me the hearing. I do not know how the other correspondence got lost. I wrote many times, including letters to President Eisenhower, to help me get a hearing, because I have nothing to hide.

So I appreciate the committee.

Mr. TUCK. Thank you. We are glad to have you here.

Mr. ROBINSON. Then I would like to admit very frankly that I suppose with age and other experiences you get some wisdom. When I was growing up, I would certainly say that I did not have a lot of wisdom. I had a lot of energy and basic concerns about a lot of vital problems.



I have never wanted nor desired to be a Communist. Nobody ever asked me explicitly to join the Communist Party, but I think they would have been happy if I had joined the Communist Party. I am sure Ben Davis and some others would have been.

I know some, not a great many, who have joined the party. During all this time, though it has no real germane place in this record, when I was doing these things, I also built a camp for underprivileged children in New Hampshire, getting 20,000 students from New England colleges to come and work with me on their vacation periods and during their weekends, to be involved in this, and the co-op store.

I was chairman of the Committee for the Integration of Negro Medical Personnel in the Voluntary Hospitals of New York, and I served during the war years, during 1943 and 1944 through 1945, making a lot of lectures to Army personnel in Fort Slocum, Fort Dix and Fort Devens and some other places, and lecturing for the Staff and Command College of the Air Force down in Montgomery on what we ought to be doing and how we should be developing Army personnel to be as concerned about some of these problems and especially communism. Most of this was from 1943 on to the present.

I would like to call to your attention that the best letter I have ever received comes from the Superintendent of the West Point Military Academy, who sees to it that we get three cadets each year, who get permission from the Department of Defense to leave the country to go into Operation Crossroads Africa every summer on the basis that the Army is going to need personnel in all of these countries as military attaches who do not know just military tactics, but have some feeling and knowledge of Africa.

The Air Force Academy wants to do it, but their problem is they start their classes too early, some time the first part of August. We tried the Navy, but we did not get them interested in it, at least, at this point.

Finally, one reason I wanted to get a hearing with the committee was that unfortunately this record, unevaluated, comes up to a lot of people, and it stands in the way of what I am trying to do in the terms of Operation Crossroads Africa.

Because, when you go to a big industry or to a big foundation they want to know about a lot of things like this. And if they get an unevaluated record, which I have had to stand up against at over a dozen universities through the years, and at many other places, and I have also stayed by until they understood my point of view, then it means I cannot do as much work as I would like or get as many people, because as a non-Government group we depend on private support to carry Crossroads.

I do not know what you will say or how this will come out, but I just wanted you to hear my point of view and see where I have stood and what I have done in the service of this country, which is the position I took when they asked for my passport.

I admit I refused to send it. I sent a statement where I was going to be every day for 3 months, if they wanted me, because I had used my passport to do things for my country in the Philippines with Mag-saysay, in Hong Kong with our consul general there, and in Western Germany, and out of that experience I was able to do many other

valuable things for the Nation. Anyway, I answered all their questions and notarized my replies under oath, and sent them in.

Fortunately, after 2 months, they wrote me and said they were satisfied with my answers and so on, and that I could keep my passport; but for the last 12 years I tried to get a hearing. I appreciate your having me. I also appreciate your courtesy. I never believed what people always said—and this is not sugarcoating it for you—how harsh this committee was. I can understand some of the problems it has with witnesses who do not want to answer questions, or who have the fifth amendment to hide behind.

I guess it is not hiding behind. They are entitled to it, I suppose. I did not see where I needed to take it at any point. I would just like for more people to see and to know, who have a chance to come on the record, what I am like, where I stand, what my ideas are, and what kind of service I can give to this country in this hour of its greatest ideological confrontation, particularly in the African Continent which is the great interest I have, and which I think is going to have an awful lot to do with our security, because it is the last great bastion of mineral resources.

The population of Africa will double in 25 years, and that will be a powerful number to have on anyone's side.

Mr. TUCK. We thank you. Do you have any questions?

Mr. ICHORD. Doctor, I did not catch where you took your doctorate.

Mr. ROBINSON. I do not have, sir, an earned doctorate. I have 7 honorary degrees.

Mr. ICHORD. Did you take a master's?

Mr. ROBINSON. No. I graduated from Lincoln University and—

Mr. ICHORD. Lincoln University, where?

Mr. ROBINSON. Pennsylvania, not Missouri.

Mr. ICHORD. We have a Lincoln University in Jefferson City.

Mr. ROBINSON. I know; I have been out there to speak.

Mr. ICHORD. I was very interested, Doctor, in your statement that no member of the Communist Party had ever solicited you to join the Communist Party. This, I thought, was a little remarkable in view of the fact that you had associated with them quite freely in various causes and on a social basis.

You state that no one ever asked you to join. Did you ever attend a Communist meeting?

Mr. ROBINSON. I never attended a Communist meeting of a Communist Party cell or a Communist meeting per se. I attended the meetings where I knew there were Communists for other causes and other reasons, where there was something I was involved in, and I was invited to, as this record shows here.

I think one reason they never asked me was because they were never quite sure of me as to where I stood. I am sure they would have liked to have me join.

Mr. ICHORD. Certainly you probably had many philosophical arguments with them. I suppose your being a minister, none of them who were atheists would discuss atheism with you.

Mr. ROBINSON. No, they were much too clever to do that, because what they wanted was the support of ministers on particular things, and that would have been an isolation. As I indicated in a chapter

of my book *Tomorrow Is Today*, they never took a position against the Negro church as such. They talked about religion being pie in the sky and all this business, and the stupidity of it, but they never took a position, even in the little pamphlet they put out a long time ago, *Survival in the Black Belt*, or something like that title, but even in this pamphlet they did not take pot shots or a difficult position against the Negro clergymen, because I think they recognized, first, if you are going to get anywhere among Negroes, always you had to use him, you had to know him, or you had to have his good will or his support, which was the same thing that the NAACP and everybody else did, as a matter of fact, that the Negro clergyman, although he was an uneducated man, at the same time was the person who had the ear of the community much more than anybody else did.

Mr. ICHORD. You stated in your testimony that back when you were associated with Mr. Robeson and Ben Davis and others in several causes, that at that time you were of the mind that you would join with a Communist or anyone who was working for the objectives that you had in mind, and then later on you changed your mind.

I would like for you to elaborate somewhat upon that.

Mr. ROBINSON. Well, I came to the place where you have to recognize, first of all, that you might do your cause and yourself more harm, if you joined with people who are better organized than you are, and better disciplined in a group than you have, and their great asset is tight discipline.

They know where they are going and what they want to do. They can play it easy or soft. They can sit in a meeting that everyone leaves, as long as there is a quorum, and they will get the votes. I saw this happen many times at first without knowing what was happening. I learned, but some people never did learn.

I do not think it would be to my advantage, for example, in Operation Crossroads Africa to let a Black Muslim come into Operation Crossroads Africa. I must admit one got in from the University of California at Berkeley, but we put him on a plane from Africa, when we found out about it, and sent him home.

I would say the same thing about Communists. I would not let Communists in either. Now, would I let them cooperate with us on anything? No, I would not take that old position of cooperating any more. I would not get involved with people with ulterior motives who really end up trying to use you to make capital for their ends.

Mr. ICHORD. What do you think motivates the majority of the people's activity in the Communist Party in America, from your own observations of those you have come into contact with?

Mr. ROBINSON. This is, of course, not scientific psychology.

Mr. ICHORD. I understand you would have to look at every side, I believe.

Mr. ROBINSON. I think there are a good many people who do not like anybody or anything, who are unhappy, dislocated personalities. This gives them a feeling of importance and of power when they join a dissident movement. I think that this is a very strong thing in the minds of a good many people who take the Communist ideological position.

Now in Russia or some other place there may be different reasons. But I think in this country that is so. As I look back on some of these people in those days who were on these committees, who were against everything and everybody, they were happiest, I feel, when everybody else was tearing their hair out, if I can put it that way. There are some who take it, of course, because they want to be at the top.

If they can get in control, they will be in the strongest group. That is, a strong group that makes all the decisions for everybody else. And I think this plays a pretty important role in the minds of many people who become Communists.

Mr. ICHORD. Do you feel that a Negro in the Peace Corps working in Africa will generally be more effective because of the acceptance in Africa? You inferred that, I thought, from your statement.

Mr. ROBINSON. May I go into that a little bit?

Mr. ICHORD. Yes.

Mr. ROBINSON. I feel strongly about that problem. I do not think we have felt in the United States the tremendous importance of the American Negro in our whole image abroad and their effectiveness among our personnel abroad, not just Africa itself. I feel it particularly in Africa.

I know, for example, it has to be the right kind of Negro. There are Negroes who want to run away from the problem. But ordinarily the good, strong, solid, well-selected Negro persons in Crossroads Africa get a better start, can go farther and make a greater impact for us. If we do not have two or three Negroes in a group of 15 young people, we have problems in that country.

Mr. ICHORD. How do those problems arise?

Mr. ROBINSON. Those problems arise, because they say, first of all, "Don't you want more Negroes to come? Who stops them from coming? Don't they want to come? Do you select young people from those schools where Negroes are not admitted?"

In other words, they accuse me, if you will, of not wanting Negroes to come, because they say this has been a part of your State Department policy for a long time in the lack of the use of Negro Government personnel abroad. The truth of the matter is that we do not have enough Negroes because of financial reasons and they think there is some ulterior reason.

What they do not realize is that there are few Negroes who can raise \$1,000. There are still fewer Negro youths that can do that and get back to school since if they go with us, they cannot work that summer. That is why we have to raise more money for minority people.

One thing we have to say to Negroes is, "Your big problem is do not let yourself get isolated, because the Africans are going to gravitate to you right off. They are going to give you most of the invitations and most of the presents. If you get these invitations you say 'Can I bring Susie or Joe,' and you share the good fortune of your advantage."

For example, we have to send a Negro to head up our group in Mali. It is to the advantage of our whole image, with their sensitivity, that we have a French speaking Negro who can head up our group in Mali this year. That gives us a long lead.

So there are some places where this is a very significant thing and we can make excellent use of Negroes. Now when we bring people here on leadership grants, time after time they call up and they say, "We would like to see Harlem" or "We would like to meet some Negroes," and it always bothered me that quite often the people in charge of them felt that we had to shield them from this.

We are bringing over 10 African students in conjunction with the State Department on a reverse flow program, who are potential youth leaders. We are going to involve them with youth leadership groups in this country, in Pennsylvania, out in the Rockies, up in Chicago, with young labor leaders, and Junior Chamber of Commerce people in Pittsburgh and here in Washington with Government leaders.

We are going to take them to Atlanta. We think they ought to go. If we do not take them, they will say, "You are hiding your race problem from us." We know there are enough people, Negro and white, in Atlanta to help them get an objective understanding of it.

It is better to do this than leave them on a limb and have the left-wingers from Iron Curtain countries say, "They did not let you see the problem. They have something to hide." And then what they will get is an exaggerated side of the problem.

I think we ought to do a good deal more than that. That is what I have been talking to State about yesterday, about how we can do this better.

Mr. ICHORD. I yield to Mr. Schadeberg.

Mr. SCHADEBERG. I have no questions.

Mr. TUCK. We have no further business before the subcommittee?

Mr. MCNAMARA. There is no further business.

Mr. TUCK. We thank you very much for your statement.

The subcommittee will stand adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 3:10 p.m. Tuesday, May 5, 1964, the subcommittee adjourned, subject to the call of the Chair.)



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